



TEX-MESS



Texas report says 'changing climate' intensifying disasters

In this Aug. 29, 2017, file photo, water from Addicks Reservoir flows into neighborhoods from floodwaters brought on by Tropical Storm Harvey in Houston.

Associated Press

By PAUL J. WEBER
Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Powerful natural disasters in Texas on the scale of Hurricane Harvey's

deadly destruction last year will become more frequent because of a changing climate, warned a new report Thursday ordered by Republican Gov. Greg Abbott in a state where

skepticism about climate change runs deep.

Continued on Page 3

LIMITED TIME OFFER!

ENTER TO WIN A
FREE TRIP TO
ARUBA
ONE HAPPY ISLAND

Here is your chance! WIN TWO FREE TICKETS to the ULTIMATE 3 NIGHTS Caribbean paradise VACATION at the PRESTIGIOUS ARUBA MARRIOTT RESORT AND CASINO*

OUR OFFER INCLUDES:
*Welcome gift bag
*Three dinner coupons
*\$1000 shopping coupon valid at either of our locations

LITTLE EUROPE TIME SQUARE



Craving
a Good
Steak?



One pound of Natural grass-Fed Beef from the Argentinean Pampas, Grilled to perfection by our Master Chefs over a real Charcoal Fire... Juicy, Lean and full of Flavor.

It's time for **El Gaucho** Steak



Closed on Sundays

Open Monday through Saturday from 11:30am till 11pm. For reservations call 582-3677
Lunch and Early Bird specials available till 5pm. Happy Hour from 5-7pm

Boy Scouts' money struggles: Is bankruptcy an option?

By **DAVID CRARY**
AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The Boy Scouts of America deflected questions about a report suggesting it is considering seeking bankruptcy protection, though the head of the organization said it is exploring "all options" as it tries to stay afloat while facing sexual abuse lawsuits and dwindling membership.

"I want to assure you that our daily mission will continue and that there are no imminent actions or immediate decisions expected," Chief Scout Executive Mike Surbaugh said in a statement issued Wednesday evening.

Surbaugh was responding to a Wall Street Journal report that the BSA, founded in 1910, had hired a law firm to assist in a possible Chapter 11 bankruptcy filing. He described the report as "news speculation," but he acknowledged that the group is "working with experts to explore all options available" as well as the pressures arising from multiple lawsuits related



In this Feb. 4, 2013 file photo, shows a close up detail of a Boy Scout uniform worn during a news conference in front of the Boy Scouts of America headquarters in Irving, Texas.

to past instances of sexual abuse. "We have a social and

moral responsibility to fairly compensate victims who suffered abuse during their time in Scouting, and we also have an obligation to carry out our mission to serve youth, families and local communities through our programs," Surbaugh said. Other institutions facing multifaceted sexual abuse scandals have sought bankruptcy protection recently. USA Gymnastics took the step last week as it attempts to settle dozens of lawsuits related to abuse by now-imprisoned gymnastics doctor Larry Nassar. About 20 Roman Catholic dioceses and other religious orders around the U.S. have previously filed for bankruptcy protection as a result of clergy sexual abuse claims. Surbaugh apologized on behalf of the BSA to those abused during their time in the Boy Scouts.

"We have always taken care of victims — we believe them, we believe in fairly compensating them and we have paid for unlimited counseling, by a provider of their choice, regardless of the amount of time that has passed since an instance of abuse," he said. "Throughout our history we have taken proactive steps to help victims heal and prevent future abuse." In addition to abuse-related litigation, the Boy Scouts have been trying to reverse a decline in membership. The organizations' current youth participation is about 2.3 million, down from 2.6 million in 2013 and more than 4 million in peak years of the past. In a major step toward revitalization, the BSA is moving to open all its programs to girls, but even that has caused problems. Last month, the Girl Scouts

of the USA filed a trademark infringement lawsuit against the BSA for dropping the word "boy" from its flagship program in an effort to attract girls. That suit was in response to the BSA's decision to rename its program for 11- to 17-year-olds; it will be called Scouts BSA rather than the Boy Scouts, though the parent organization will remain the Boy Scouts of America. Paul Mones, a Los Angeles-based lawyer who has handled many sex-abuse lawsuits targeting the BSA, said the organization has assets of more than \$1 billion, but has been under increasing pressure from litigation as public awareness of sexual abuse intensifies. Mones was co-counsel in a 2010 sexual abuse case in Portland, Oregon, that led to a nearly \$20 million judgment against the BSA on behalf of a man molested by a Scout leader in the 1980s. As a result of that case, the Oregon Supreme Court ordered the BSA to release previously confidential files on suspected abusers. □

Associated Press

pureocean
BEACHSIDE DINING

IT'S 5 O'CLOCK SOMEWHERE...

JOIN US!
HAPPY HOUR DAILY
FROM 5-6 PM

SUNSETS | DRINK SPECIALS | FREE PARKING

Tantalize your taste buds with
delicious NEW bar bites starting at just \$8
and pair it with the perfect glass of
wine, cocktail or beer!

Located at Divi Aruba Phoenix Beach Resort
J.E. Irausquin Blvd. 75, Palm Beach

For more information, call 586-6066 ext. 7002

DIVI ARUBA PHOENIX
BEACH RESORT - ARUBA

ARUBA TODAY

For ADVERTISEMENTS in our Newspaper

linda.reijnders@cspnv.com



Asiesmi Peruvian Food & More

J.E. Irausquin Blvd 64 - Eagle Beach, Aruba - www.asiesmiperuenaruba.com - Closed Mon
Info: + 297 525 4000 (Ext 172) / 588 3958 - reservations@asiesmiperuenaruba.com

Sharing Menu \$50 per couple





2 appetizers 1 Main dish 1 Dessert



Texas report says 'changing climate' intensifying disasters



In this Aug. 28, 2017, file photo, a Coast Guard rescue team evacuates people from a neighborhood inundated by floodwaters from Tropical Storm Harvey in Houston, Texas.

Associated Press

Continued from Front

But the report makes no mention of global warming. And in urging steps Texas should take to lessen the impact of intensifying hurricanes and flooding, the report makes no mention of curbing greenhouse gases in Texas, the nation's oil-refining epicenter that leads the U.S. in carbon emissions. The phrase "climate change" also does not appear in the nearly 200-page report, except in footnotes that reference scientific papers.

But it is the latest government alarm that massive disasters such as Harvey will only continue. Last month, a White House report warned these types of disasters are worsening because of global warming, and citing numerous studies, said more than 90 percent of the current warming is caused by humans. After releasing the new Texas report Thursday, Abbott wouldn't wade into whether he believed manmade global warming is causing the kind of disasters the state is telling residents to get used to.

"I'm not a scientist. Impos-

sible for me to answer that question," he said.

The report was not commissioned as an assessment of climate change in Texas. Instead, it is the findings of a rebuilding task force Abbott created after Hurricane Harvey devastated the Texas coast, causing an estimated \$125 billion in damage. At least 68 people directly died from Harvey's effects, and another 35 people died from indirect effects such as vehicle accidents, according to the report.

The Category 4 hurricane dumped more than 50 inches of rain on Houston, leaving the nation's fourth-largest city underwater.

But in underscoring the inevitability of future disasters in Texas, the report notes rising sea levels and extreme downpours becoming more frequent in recent decades. It also cites a "changing climate" while reinforcing the need to strengthen dams and levees. "Flooding risks for coastal Texas, and much of the rest of the state, will continue to rise. The current scientific consensus points to increasing amounts of intense rainfall coupled

with the likelihood of more intense hurricanes," the report read.

The report was spearheaded by Texas A&M University System Chancellor John Sharp, who Abbott appointed as a recovery czar after the storm. It urges state and local officials to think in "generational terms" to infrastructure planning so as to "future-proof" the Gulf Coast.

"I don't know," Sharp said.

"It looks like something's changing but I'm not sure I'm a good enough scientist to know what it is. I leave it in their hands."

John Anderson, a professor of oceanography at Rice University and expert on rising sea levels, said the report continues a trend of denials from Texas leaders. "The tendency in the state of Texas has been to combat the changing climate without acknowledging the

causes of climate change," he said. "The elephant in the room is getting bigger." Abbott, who easily won re-election in November, has been noncommittal in his career about whether he thinks human activity is affecting the climate. Before becoming governor in 2015, Abbott repeatedly sued the federal government over environmental regulations as Texas' attorney general. □



L.G. SMITH'S
STEAK & CHOP HOUSE

BRUNCH IS LIKE A HOLIDAY IN ITSELF.

Dec 2, 9, 16, 23, 25, 30

We're celebrating the holiday season the best way we know how, with Sunday brunch and bubbly. Join us at Renaissance Aruba's L.G. Smith's Steak & Chop House for a festive morning of a la carte dining and bottomless mimosas.

\$52.95 per person. Please note that a 6% sales tax and 15% service charge will be added to your final bill. For more info, or to make a reservation, contact our Navigator at 523-6115

Pelosi's triumph: House speaker-to-be, this time with memes

By LISA MASCARO

AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — It has been quite a week for Nancy Pelosi.

The televised meeting with President Donald Trump. The deal with restless Democrats to secure their votes to become House speaker. The fashion statement of her burnt-orange winter coat, swooshing out the doors of the White House, going viral in social media memes.

It all showed the staying power of the Democratic leader, who is relentless in her drive to reclaim the gavel and wield it with a strength that is nothing like Washington has seen — at least since the last time she did it.

"We've seen some strong speakers like Pelosi and some weaker speakers," said Matthew Green, a professor of political science at Catholic University who has written a book about House speakers.

"What we've seen this week is another demon-



House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi of California holds a news conference at the Capitol in Washington, Thursday, Dec. 13, 2018.

stration of how effective Pelosi is, in both her negotiation skills and in her ability to stand up publicly to a president of the opposite party," he said. "The most dangerous place to be in Washington is between Pelosi and an undecided vote. It's like a beeline; she

goes right for that person. That's her thing."

Pelosi has said this time as speaker would be different. On the campaign trail this fall, she told The Associated Press she would "enjoy it" more because last time it was all "work." She said she wants to "show the power

of the gavel."

But even before winning back the speakership, she is employing its strength. Pelosi used it during Tuesday's Oval Office meeting with Trump, refusing his \$5 billion border wall money; on Republicans during their last days in the majority; and on her fellow Democrats to give her their support.

The public display this week points to the return of one of the more powerful leaders in the history of the House, even if she's now term-limited herself to serving as speaker no more than four years. It's the start of a long final act of the 78-year-old mother of five and grandmother of nine, and she's more comfortable than ever taking her seat at the table.

"Leader Pelosi really demonstrated this week why she is about to become the speaker of the House," said Rep. David Cicilline, D-R.I., part of the newer generation of House leaders. "She had a great week."

Not everyone on the Democratic side is pleased with the turn of events, and Republicans made clear they are more than eager to accommodate Pelosi's rise, employing the kinds of attacks they have for years used against her. They'll be targeting newly elected

Democrats who vote for Pelosi for speaker when the new Congress convenes Jan. 3, especially those who had vowed on the campaign trail to oppose her.

Republican National Committee chairwoman Ronna McDaniel tweeted that "So many Dem House candidates have proven themselves to be hypocrites." She tweeted, "Voters won't forget it."

And some House Democrats, including members who have been waiting for Pelosi to step aside so they could rise in leadership, are grumbling over the deal she cut to impose term limits for top leaders. Democrats will vote on that proposal in the new year, and it could very well fail. Pelosi has promised to abide by the deal regardless of the vote. "I'm not for term limits," the No. 2 Democrat, Rep. Steny Hoyer, D-Md., told reporters. "Is anybody confused about — I am not for term limits."

But Thursday, the speaker-in-waiting capped off the week-that-was by recapping what had just happened — in case anyone missed the social media memes of Pelosi in that coat, exiting the White House.


Pelosi recalled the moment Tuesday in the Oval Office when Trump, arguing with her and Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer, finally relented and said he'd be "proud" to shut down the government before Christmas — the "Trump shutdown," as she called it — over the border wall.

"Perhaps he doesn't understand people need their paychecks," she said Thursday.

She all but eye-rolled at his insistence that Mexico would pay for it. "I mean really? Really?"

And although Pelosi hasn't spoken to Trump since that day, she confided that he is in her prayers. "I did tell the president that I pray for him. He said, 'That's news, go tell the press.'" And so she did. □

50% Already Sold



HARBOUR HOUSE
Aruba

Weststraat 2 , Oranjestad, Aruba
www.harbourhousearuba.com

(+297) 594 6395 / 582 0039
sales@harbourhousearuba.com

ONLINE GROCERY DELIVERY SERVICE

*From the Store to your Door!***\$10 OFF**
Coupon code:
ARUBATODAY**SAVE TIME
GROCERY SHOP
ONLINE****www.GroceriesToGoAruba.com**

Court: Trump can't let companies deny birth control coverage

By SUDHIN THANAWALA
Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — A divided U.S. appeals court Thursday blocked rules by the Trump administration that allowed more employers to opt out of providing women with no-cost birth control.

The ruling, however, may be short lived because the administration has adopted new rules on contraceptive coverage that are set to take effect next month and will likely prompt renewed legal challenges.

Thursday's ruling by a three-judge panel of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals concerned changes to birth control coverage requirements under President Barack Obama's health care law that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued in October 2017.

States were likely to succeed on their claim that those changes were made without required notice and public comment, the appeals court panel said in a 2-1 decision.

The majority upheld a preliminary injunction against the rules issued by U.S. District Judge Haywood Gilliam last year. It, however, limited the scope of the injunction, applying it only to the five states in the lawsuit and not the entire country. Another federal judge also blocked the rules, and her nationwide injunction remains in place.

An email to the Justice Department seeking comment was not immediately returned.

Obama's health care law required most companies to cover birth control at no additional cost, though



In this Aug. 26, 2016, file photo, a one-month dosage of hormonal birth control pills is displayed in Sacramento, Calif.

it included exemptions for religious organizations. The new policy allowed more categories of employers, including publicly traded companies, to opt out of providing free contraception to women by claiming religious objections. It also allowed any company that is not publicly traded to deny coverage on moral grounds.

The Department of Justice said in court documents that the rules were about protecting a small group of "sincere religious and moral objectors" from having to violate their beliefs. The changes were favored by social conservatives who are staunch supporters of President Donald Trump.

California filed a lawsuit to block the changes that was joined by Delaware,

Maryland, New York and Virginia.

The states argued that the changes could result in millions of women losing free birth control services, forcing them to seek contraceptive care through state-run programs or programs that the states had to reimburse.

The states show with "reasonable probability" that the new rules will lead women to lose employer-sponsored contraceptive coverage, "which will then result in economic harm to the states," 9th Circuit Judge J. Clifford Wallace, a nominee of Republican President Richard Nixon, wrote for the majority.

In a dissent, 9th Circuit Judge Andrew Kleinfeld said the economic harm to the states was "self-inflict-

ed" because they chose to provide contraceptive coverage to women. The states, therefore, did not have the authority to bring the lawsuit, Kleinfeld, a nominee of Republican President George H.W. Bush, said.

The case became more complicated after the Trump administration last month issued new birth control coverage rules that are set to supersede those at issue in the lawsuit before the 9th Circuit. Under the new rules, large companies whose stock is sold to investors won't be able to opt out of providing contraceptive coverage.

Wallace said the new rules did not make the case before the 9th Circuit moot because they are not set to take effect until January. □

Associated Press

Police recruit accused of threatening graduation shooting

LACONIA, N.H. (AP) —

A police recruit spoke to fellow officers about participating in a suicide pact or killing other officers at their graduation ceremony at New Hampshire's police academy, a court document released Thursday alleged. Noah Beaulieu told one recruit that "all it would take was one shot fired in the air and all the cross-fire from responding officers would be what killed everyone," according to an affidavit.

Police arrested Beaulieu, 24, of Concord, on a criminal threatening charge. They said he was a recruit from the Laconia Police Department who recently completed a program at the New Hampshire Police Standards and Training Academy. He was fired Wednesday. Beaulieu was scheduled to be arraigned Thursday, but instead, a judge ordered him to remain in custody and requested a mental health evaluation for him.

His lawyer, Mark Sisti, said he never meant to harm anyone.

The affidavit said other recruits told Beaulieu to stop making the comments and that they weren't funny, but Beaulieu continued to talk about bringing machine guns and ammunition to the graduation ceremony, which is scheduled for Friday.

They also reported he said a movie would be made about him when he became a serial killer. □

Southwestern U.S. states get Jan. 31 deadline for drought deal

By **KEN RITTER**

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — The head of the federal agency controlling the Colorado River said Thursday the U.S. government will impose unprecedented restrictions on water supplies to the seven Southwestern U.S. states that depend on the river unless everyone agrees by Jan. 31 on a plan to deal with an expected shortage in 2020.

Water users from Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming should have had a pact to sign at an annual water users' conference this week in Las Vegas, Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner Brenda Burman said.

They didn't. However, a flurry of approvals in several states in recent weeks signaled urgency and set a stage for an overall agreement to use less water from a river beset by drought and locked into promises to deliver more water than it takes in.

Burman identified California and Arizona as the



In this Oct. 14, 2015, file photo, a riverboat glides through Lake Mead on the Colorado River at Hoover Dam near Boulder City, Nev.

holdouts.

"Close isn't 'done,' " she told a standing-room crowd at the Colorado River Water Users Association conference at a Las Vegas Strip resort. "Only 'done' will protect this basin."

The river that carries winter snowmelt from the Rocky Mountains to the Gulf of Mexico is plumbed with dams to generate hydro-

power and meter water releases. It provides drinking water to 40 million people and cities including Los Angeles, San Diego, Denver, Phoenix and Las Vegas. It irrigates crops in wide areas once deemed as reclaimed desert in the U.S. and Mexico.

The keys to contingency plans are voluntary agreements to use less water than users are allocated

from the river's two largest reservoirs, Lake Powell behind the Glen Canyon Dam on the Arizona-Utah state line and Lake Mead behind Hoover Dam just east of Las Vegas.

Lake Powell is currently at 43 percent capacity; Lake Mead at 38 percent.

To date, entities including agricultural districts and municipal suppliers in five states have reached what

Associated Press

Burman characterized as a complex puzzle of agreements.

Indian tribes also are involved, and Burman on Thursday announced publication of a report called the Colorado River Basin Ten Tribes Partnership Tribal Water Study. It charts water claims and use by tribes that hold rights to divert almost 20 percent of the water in the river.

A drought-shortage declaration next year would cut 11.4 percent of Arizona's usual river water allocation beginning in 2020, and 4.3 percent of Nevada's share. That amount of water, combined, would serve more than 625,000 homes. California would voluntarily reduce its Colorado River use by about 6 percent.

Arizona gained approvals for conservation, mitigation and payment plans from its Department of Water Resources and the key Central Arizona Project irrigation district. Unlike the other states, it also needs state Legislature approval for water agreements. Lawmakers convene in January. □

Lease sale in Alaska petroleum reserve draws modest interest

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP)

— A federal sale of oil leases in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska has again drawn a modest response.

The Bureau of Land Management on Wednesday received 16 bids on 16 tracts covering 272 square miles (705 sq. kilometers), the Alaska Journal of Commerce reported.

The BLM had offered 254 tracts on more than 4,375 square miles (11,330 sq. kilometers).

Federal officials said the modest bidding could be attributed to the lack of access to the most prospective areas. BLM received seven bids in a 2017 lease sale.

Environmental groups oppose expanded drilling in

the reserve west of Prudhoe Bay. They say oil development will imperil caribou herds, polar bears and ecologically significant wetlands used for breeding by migratory waterfowl from around the world.

The bids ranged from \$57,000 to \$216,000 per lease and took in \$1.13 million. Half will go to the state of Alaska through revenue sharing. Most leases sold are near areas that ConocoPhillips is exploring and developing.

Assistant Interior Secretary Joe Balash in a call with reporters said the 2018 results were encouraging. The lack of bidding, he said, compared with more active bidding on nearby state lands, underscores the need to review the

land-use plan of the reserve.

The petroleum reserve was created in 1923 by President Warren Harding as the Naval Petroleum Reserve and set aside as an emergency oil supply for the Navy. It covers 35,625 square miles (92,269 sq. kilometers), about the size of Indiana.

Former Interior Secretary Ken Salazar in 2013 announced a management plan that split the reserve's acreage roughly in half between conservation areas and land available for petroleum development. Salazar said oil companies would have access to nearly three-fourths of the estimated economically recoverable oil in the reserve. □



WACKY WAHOOS

PALM BEACH #33-A WWW.WACKYWAHOOS.COM

STEAK. SEAFOOD. B.B.Q. & FUN!

Ex-Hadicurari BBQ & Grill with the same owner's.
We do our own daily fishing so we serve the freshest seafood on the Island.

Very reasonable price, exciting menu and NO SERVICE CHARGE

Dinner from 5:30 - 10:00
Monday - Saturday



FRESH CATCH & SEAFOOD
We are located close to the High-rise hotel's at walking distance.
RESERVATION SUGGESTED

TEL: 586-7333



THE Sopranos
PIANO BAR

**EVERY MONTH
A DIFFERENT
PIANO PLAYER**

DAILY LIVE ENTERTAINMENT
FROM 8 PM

**FRIDAY
HAPPY HOUR**

2 for 1
on all drinks
from 5pm till 8pm

LIVE ON STAGE
5 PM TILL 8 PM
Live on stage Local Musician

WEDNESDAY

COUPLES NIGHT
Heineken draft or
champagne for
the ladies **\$4.00**

SATURDAY

**'UNPLUGGED
NIGHT'**
8 PM TILL 1 AM
Live on stage Local Musician

**PARTY
LARGE
OR SMALL
WE DO
THEM ALL!**

Bottle
service &
Cuban Cigars
available.

Arawak Garden, Palm Beach, Aruba - T. +297 586 8622 E. sopranos@arubawineanddine.com - www.sopranospianobararuba.com

Like us on Facebook    ARUBA WINE & DINE

Authorities: Wave of hoax bomb threats made across U.S.

NEW YORK (AP) — A wave of bomb threats emailed Thursday to hundreds of schools, businesses and government buildings across the U.S. triggered searches, evacuations and fear — but there were no signs of explosives, and authorities said the scare appeared to be a crude extortion attempt.

Law enforcement agencies across the country dismissed the threats, saying they were meant to cause disruption and compel recipients into sending money and were not considered credible.

Some of the emails had the subject line: "Think Twice." They were sent from a spoofed email address. The sender claimed to have had an associate plant a small bomb in the recipient's building and that the only way to stop him from setting it off was by making an online payment of \$20,000 in Bitcoin.

"We are currently monitoring multiple bomb threats



A police officer removes police tape along California Street in San Francisco, Thursday, Dec. 13, 2018.

that have been sent electronically to various locations throughout the city," the New York City Police Department's counterterrorism unit tweeted. "These threats are also being reported to other locations nationwide & are NOT considered credible at this

time."

Other law enforcement agencies also dismissed the threats, which were written in a choppy style reminiscent of the Nigerian prince email scam.

The Palm Beach County, Florida, sheriff's office and the Boise, Idaho, police

Associated Press said they had no reason to believe that threats made to locations in those areas were credible. One of the emails wound up in a spam filter, Boise Police Chief William Bones said.

The FBI said it is assisting law enforcement agencies that are dealing with the threats.

"As always, we encourage the public to remain vigilant and to promptly report suspicious activities which could represent a threat to public safety," the FBI said in a statement. Across the country, some schools closed early and others were evacuated or placed on lockdown because of the hoax. Authorities said a threat emailed to a school in Troy, Missouri, about 55 miles (88 kilometers) north-east of St. Louis, was sent from Russia.

The bomb threats also prompted evacuations at city hall in Aurora, Illinois, the offices of the News & Observer in Raleigh, North Carolina, a suburban Atlanta courthouse and businesses in Detroit.

"Organizations nationwide, both public and private, have reported receiving emailed bomb threats today," Michigan State Police spokeswoman Shannon Banner said. "They are not targeted toward any one specific sector." □

Man puts up sculpture of middle finger as a message to town

By **LISA RATHKE**
Associated Press

WESTFORD, Vt. (AP) — A Vermont man who is in an ongoing dispute with his town has let officials know exactly how he feels by erecting a large wooden sculpture of a fist with the middle finger raised on his front lawn.

Ted Pelkey said Thursday

that he has been trying for about 10 years to move his truck repair and recycling business to his property but has been unable to get a permit. He paid about \$3,000 to have the roughly 7-foot-tall (2-meter-tall) sculpture carved with a chain saw. In November, he put it on a 16-foot (4.8-meter) pole with lights

where it can be seen from the road.

"I wasn't trying to get fame out of it at all.... I'm just mad," he said. "I just got pushed in the corner, and it's just I'm done with it."

Since the sculpture went up, people have been stopping by during the day and even night to take photos of it and with it. □



Ted Pelkey stands in front of a wooden sculpture on his front lawn on Thursday, Dec. 13, 2018, in Westford, Vt.

Associated Press

Official: Police kill man thought to be France shooter

By **SAMUEL PETREQUIN**
ELAINE GANLEY
MSTYSLAV CHERNOV
Associated Press
STRASBOURG, France (AP)

— A man suspected of being the gunman who killed three people near a Christmas market in Strasbourg died in a shootout with police Thursday following a two-day manhunt.

Interior Minister Christophe Castaner said the dead man's identity hasn't been confirmed yet. But Castaner said the "individual corresponds to the description of the person sought since Tuesday night," 29-year-old Cherif Chekatt.

A top police official also told The Associated Press that "everything indicates" the man was Chekatt. The official could not be named because he is not authorized to speak publicly on ongoing investigations.

Castaner said the suspect opened fire on police Thursday night when officials tried to arrest him.

"The moment they tried to arrest him, he turned around and opened fired. They replied," Castaner said.

A local police official, who also spoke on condition of anonymity, said the man who shot at police was



French police officers stand in the Neudorf neighborhood, in Strasbourg, eastern France, Thursday, Dec. 13, 2018.

armed with a pistol and a knife.

The shooting occurred in the Neudorf neighborhood of Strasbourg, where police searched intensively earlier Thursday for Cherif Chekatt, a 29-year-old suspected of being the Christmas market gunman.

Chekatt is accused of killing three people and wounding 13 on Tuesday night. Castaner said earlier Thursday that three of the injured had been released from hospital and three

others were fighting for their lives.

More than 700 officers were deployed to find Chekatt, who had a long criminal record and had been flagged for extremism, government spokesman Benjamin Griveaux told CNews television.

Asked about the instructions they received, Griveaux said the focus was catching Chekatt "as soon as possible," dead or alive, and to "put an end to the manhunt."

Associated Press
Security forces, including the elite Raid squad, spent two hours searching in Neudorf on Thursday based on "supposition only" that Chekatt could have been hiding in a building nearby two days after the attack, a French police official said. Chekatt grew up in Neudorf.

Chekatt allegedly shouted "God is great!" in Arabic and sprayed gunfire from a security zone near the Christmas market Tuesday evening. Authorities said

he was wounded during an exchange of fire with security forces and a taxi driver dropped him off in Neudorf after he escaped.

Prosecutors opened a terror investigation. More than 700 officers were deployed to find Chekatt, who had a long criminal record and had been flagged for extremism, government spokesman Benjamin Griveaux told CNews television.

Asked about the instructions they received, Griveaux said the focus was catching Chekatt "as soon as possible," dead or alive, and to "put an end to the manhunt."

So far, five people have been arrested and remanded in custody in connection with the investigation, including Chekatt's parents and two of his brothers.

The Paris prosecutor's office said the fifth, who was arrested Thursday at an undisclosed location, was a member of Chekatt's "entourage" but not a family member. France has raised its three-stage threat index to the highest level since the attack and deployed 1,800 additional soldiers across the country to help patrol streets and secure crowded events. □

Turkey train crash leaves 9 dead, dozens injured

By **BURHAN OZBILICI**
SUZAN FRASER
Associated Press

ANKARA, Turkey (AP) — A high-speed train hit a railway engine and crashed into a pedestrian overpass Thursday at a station in the Turkish capital of Ankara, killing nine people and injuring dozens, officials said. The 6:30 a.m. train from Ankara to the central Turkish city of Konya collided head-on with the engine, which was checking the tracks at the capital's small Marsandiz station, Transport Minister Mehmet Cahit Turhan told reporters after inspecting the site. The high-speed train, which the Anadolu Agency said was



Members of rescue services work at the scene of a train accident in Ankara, Turkey, Thursday, Dec. 13, 2018.

carrying 206 passengers, usually passes through that station without stopping.

At least two cars derailed, hitting the station's over-

pass, which then collapsed onto the train. Three engine drivers and six passengers were killed in the crash, Turhan said. One passen-

ger died after being hospitalized while the others were killed at the scene.

Television footage showed emergency services working to rescue passengers from wrangled cars and debris. Hurriyet newspaper said sniffer dogs assisted efforts to find survivors. Turhan said later no one else was believed to be trapped.

It wasn't immediately clear if a signaling problem caused the crash. Authorities detained three state railway employees over suspected negligence and President Recep Tayyip Erdogan vowed a thorough investigation.

Passenger Ayse Ozyurt told the IHA news agency that

the accident occurred 12 minutes after the train left the main station and that it had not yet gained its maximum speed.

"The train was not fast at that time yet," she said. "Suddenly, there was a frightening breakage ... and the train was off the rail." Konya, about 260 kilometers (160 miles) south of Ankara, is home to the tomb of the Sufi mystic and poet Jalaladdin Rumi, attracting thousands of pilgrims and tourists. The crash occurred during an annual week of remembrance for Rumi, when many travel to Konya to watch Whirling Dervishes, members of a Sufi sect, perform. □

UNICEF: 2 million children in Syria still out of schools

By BASSEM MROUE

Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Even though Syria's civil war is winding down, 2 million of the country's children are still out of schools and it will likely take years and a lot of funding to help overcome the scars of the seven-year conflict, the head of the U.N. children's agency said Thursday.

UNICEF's Executive Director Henrietta Fore said the agency has a shortfall of \$95 million this year and has appealed for funds. She expects the agency's needs to swell even more only in 2019 as more refugees return to Syria and internally displaced people move back to their homes. Speaking to The Associated Press in Beirut after returning from a visit to Syria, she said schools that have not been destroyed by war are packed with students although some of them lack electricity or even



UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore, speaks during an interview with The Associated Press after returning from a visit to Syria, in Beirut, Lebanon, Thursday, Dec. 13, 2018.

doors and windows. Fore spent five days touring areas recaptured earlier this year by government forces from insurgents including the Damascus eastern sub-

urb of Douma, the southern province of Daraa and areas in the central provinces of Homs and Hama.

Speaking about Douma, Fore said that for families that have returned to the suburb "it is very difficult. I mean they are looking for water, they're looking for

food. This is winter time in Syria, its cold but with just a little of plastic sheeting you cannot close in these apartments that are amid the rubble."

"The living conditions are extremely difficult," Fore said. "The destruction is widespread. The donor

community has been generous but we need to stay the course. The needs are enormous." Syria's conflict that began in March 2011 has impacted children heavily, many of whom have been killed or wounded. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a war monitor, released a death toll for the conflict this week saying that among the half a million people killed over the past seven years, 20,819 were children or teenagers. The war has also wounded more than a million persons, including children who lost their limbs as a result of bombardment or touching unexploded ordnance.

Fore said UNICEF and its partners are working on psychosocial support for the children who've been through too much violence and mine awareness program is one of the most important required now. She added that some three million children are trying to learn about unexploded ordnances. □

Pope to visit Bulgaria, Macedonia in May in busy travel year



Pope Francis leaves after he celebrated Mass on the occasion of the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican, Wednesday, Dec. 12, 2018.

Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis is travelling in May to the Orthodox countries of Bulgaria and Macedonia, where he will pay tribute to Macedonian-born Mother Teresa, officials said Thursday. During the May 5-7 trip, Francis will visit the Bulgarian cities of Sofia and Rakovski, followed by a stop in the Macedonian capital Skopje en route home, the Vatican said. Francis canonized Mother Theresa as St. Theresa of Calcutta in September

2016 for her dedication to serving the poor. She was born Agnese Gonxhe Bojaxhiu in Skopje in 1910 and died in Calcutta in 1997, where she spent much of her life. The former Soviet republic of Bulgaria, too, is mostly Orthodox and hosted St. John Paul II in 2002. During that visit, the Polish-born John Paul tried to put to rest suspicion that Bulgaria's secret service was behind Turkish gunman Mehmet Ali Agca's attempt to kill him in St. Peter's Square in 1981. □

Join us at **RED FISH**

Quality Seafood Restaurant

Orange Plaza - Italiestraat 50
Tel: 280-6666 - www.redfisharuba.com
Tuesday to Sunday - 11:30am to 10:00pm

Yemen's port city of Aden shows challenge of peace

By JON GAMBRELL
MALAK HARB

Associated Press

ADEN, Yemen (AP) — Yemen's government nearly saw itself pushed into the sea by advancing rebels here three years ago. Now the port city of Aden shows the challenges that will likely still plague the nation following any potential peace agreement.

Bursts of heavy machine gun fire still punctuates the nights in Aden, now the seat of the internationally recognized government, a city marked with war-shattered buildings and questions over what an end to Yemen's conflict might mean for a region where secessionist flags appear to fly everywhere.

As a round of peace talks in Sweden ended Thursday between the government and Houthi rebels, foreign journalists on a tour organized by the Saudi-led military coalition saw a city needing huge sums of money and aid. A Central Bank official spoke of a hoped-for infusion of \$3 billion by Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, underscoring the long road ahead for the Arab world's poorest country as U.S. lawmakers grow increasingly uneasy about America's role in the conflict.

"The road ahead is extremely difficult," said Adam Baron, a Yemen analyst at the European Council on Foreign Relations and the Washington-based think tank New America. "Security issues remain extremely perilous in the city of Aden, the economy remains in deep trouble and the currency continues to fluctuate."

Yemen, the southern undercarriage of the Arabian Peninsula also home to oil-rich Saudi Arabia and the Dubai skyscrapers of the United Arab Emirates, was torn by decades of warfare prior to this current conflict. Rebels known as Houthis stormed into the capital, Sanaa, in September 2014 and later seized power from the country's internationally recognized govern-



A soldier allied to Yemen's internationally recognized government stands guard at the fish market in Aden, Yemen, Thursday, Dec. 13, 2018.

ment.

The Houthis, an armed group of followers of the Zaidi sect of Shiite Islam, pushed government forces south and almost entirely out of Aden before Saudi and Emirati forces backed by other nations like the U.S. launched a war against them in March 2015. They still hold Sanaa and surrounding areas in Yemen's north.

More than 60,000 people have been killed in Yemen's war since 2016, according to the U.S.-based Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, or ACLED, which tracks the conflict. The fighting has also displaced 2 million others, spawned a cholera epidemic and pushed the country to the brink of famine as emaciated children die of malnutrition. Millions wake up hungry each day, not knowing from where their next meal will come.

On the surface, life appears to be humming on in Aden. Fishermen secure their catches in the sun-soaked waters of the Gulf of Aden. Cashiers thump through giant wads of cash at the Central Bank.

But Yemen's currency, though making recent

gains, has heavily depreciated in the war. Government salaries, a major economic driver, dried up for those in Houthi-controlled areas.

"We need international support in the upcoming year to fill the gap and allow us to pay salaries to Yemeni citizens," said Maeen Abdulmalik Saeed, the prime minister of Yemen's internationally recognized government.

"Supporting Yemen's economy will largely impact the humanitarian situation in Yemen." Saudi Arabia has deposited billions into Yemen's Central Bank to support the country. Officials hope another \$3 billion soon will come from Kuwait and the UAE, said Shokeib Hobeishy, the deputy head of Central Bank.

"Oil exports used to amount to 76 percent of the country's income," Hobeishy said. "This is one of the main reasons that we stress the importance of resuming Yemen's capability to export oil."

Yet Western fatigue with the Saudi-led war is growing. The killing and dismemberment of Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi at the kingdom's consul-

ate in Istanbul, allegedly by members of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's royal entourage, has fueled the anger of U.S. lawmakers. Already, the U.S. refueling of Saudi warplanes has stopped after months of indiscriminate airstrikes on hospitals and markets, killing civilians.

Saeed, Yemen's prime minister, invoked the regional threat from Iran as a reason America needed to remain involved in the conflict, something earlier echoed on a trip last month to Yemen by U.S. Ambassador Matthew Tueller. United Nations experts, Western nations and analysts say Iran supplies the Houthis with weapons ranging from assault rifles up to the ballistic missiles the rebels can now fire deeply into Saudi Arabia to target its capital, Riyadh. Iran denies arming the rebels.

"Yemen's security and the stability of the region is the most important thing right now," Saeed said. "The United States' decision should take into account what Iran is doing in the region and the role it plays in Yemen."

Peace talks over ending the war wrapped up Thurs-

day in Rimbo, Sweden, with the warring sides agreeing to a cease-fire in the strategic port city of Hodeida, where fighting has disrupted vital aid deliveries for the entire country, and a withdrawal of combatants from the city's front lines. The agreement is considered an important first step toward further talks in January aimed at drawing down the stalemated conflict. However, more conflicts lurk just beneath the war. Throughout Aden, murals bore the flag of the former Communist South Yemen. Even soldiers escorting foreign journalists in Aden flew the tricolor red, white and black flag, its light blue chevron and red star flapping in the wind.

"It's quite clear that many Southern secessionists are now empowered; the key moving forward is going to be the solution to the southern issue," said Baron, the Yemen analyst. "Yemen will not have any sort of wider-range stability until the southern issue is dealt with in some form, and I think that's something obvious that you can't ignore if you're walking or driving through the streets of Aden." □



Havana Sunset Cruise



ADULTS US\$50 ONLY FRIDAY CHILDREN (4-12) US\$27.

Salsa music, Cuban snacks, Open bar with Mojitos, learn how to dance salsa & entertainment on board. Time 5:30 till 7:30pm

Snacks: Banana Chips with shredded chicken, pork & chicken cracklings with mojito dip.

Visit us at Casa del Mar, Playa Linda, Holiday Inn Concierge/lobby desk/ beach huts, RIU Hut between Antilla & Palace Hotel on the beach, or at our own Pelican Pier located between the Holiday Inn & Playa Linda Resort.

For reservations call 587-2302 (Mon-Sun) Or book online at: www.pelican-aruba.com

30th Anniversary
Certificate of Excellence
2018 Winner
PRESENT THIS AD AND RECEIVE
\$10 DISCOUNT PER COUPLE

Top al-Shabab defector-turned-Somalia candidate is arrested

By ABDI GULED
Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) —

The former No. 2 leader of Somalia's al-Shabab extremist group, who is now a top candidate in a regional election next week, was arrested on Thursday, prompting violent protests in which four people were killed, officials said.

Mukhtar Robow, once al-Shabab's spokesman, was arrested by Ethiopian troops that are part of the African Union peacekeeping forces supporting Somalia's federal government, Nur Ahmed, an electoral official in Southwest state, told The Associated Press.

The arrest could re-ignite old tensions between Somalia and neighboring Ethiopia.

Robow was flown from Baidoa to the capital, Mogadishu, said a Somali intelligence official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media.

In a statement, Somalia's security ministry confirmed



In this Wednesday, Oct. 10, 2018 file photo, Mukhtar Robow, who was once deputy leader of Africa's deadliest Islamic extremist group the al-Qaida-linked al-Shabab, speaks at a press conference about his candidacy for a regional presidency, in Baidoa, Somalia.

Associated Press

Robow's arrest, citing the federal government's earlier ban on his candidacy and alleging that he had failed to renounce extremist ideology. The statement also accused Robow of mobilizing armed forces to threaten the security of Baidoa.

There was no immediate comment from Ethiopia or the AU force, AMISOM.

Robow made a high-profile

defection last year from al-Shabab, Africa's most active extremist group, and is now running to be regional president of Southwest state in elections scheduled for Dec. 19. His defection was welcomed by Somalia's government, but not his candidacy, which appeared to take some officials by surprise.

The Ethiopian soldiers arrested Robow at the re-

gional president's residence in Baidoa, according to witnesses. The regional candidates had been summoned for a meeting there. Somali police accompanied Ethiopian soldiers in the arrest, officials said.

Gunfire erupted in Baidoa as Robow's supporters protested his arrest.

Armed militias thought to be linked to Robow were seen on the streets, said police Col. Ahmed Abdi.

At least four people were killed, including an Ethiopian soldier, in the clashes between troops and armed men thought to be Robow's supporters, Abdi said. The Ethiopian army deployed tanks and hundreds of soldiers in Baidoa following the fighting, he said.

The lanky, bearded Robow last year had a \$5 million bounty on his head, offered by the U.S. government, but the reward was dropped before he defected from al-Shabab.

Although he is blamed for directing much of the rebels' violence, he is general-

ly popular in the Southwest region. Robow's controversial campaign exposed the rift between Somalia's federal government based in Mogadishu and the regional government.

Worried about Robow's popularity, the federal government had sent at least one high-level official to try to persuade him to step aside.

"I was asked to relinquish my candidacy but I'm telling you that ... I will be running for president," Robow told supporters in October. "With the help of God, we will win and peace will win." The U.S. military's Africa command, which carried out operations against al-Shabab alongside Somali and AU forces, said it was aware of the reports of Robow's arrest.

The arrest was criticized by Rashid Abdi, an analyst with the International Crisis Group.

"A thoroughly daft move on part of the Ethiopians," said Abdi in a tweet. "They have now made him a martyr; increased his popularity even more." □



BARNEY'S

BAR & RESTAURANT

EARLY BIRD
3 COURSE MENU
FROM 4 TILL 6.30
\$24.50

DAILY HAPPY HOUR
FROM 4PM TILL 6 PM

EVERYDAY FRESH CATCH
NO SERVICE CHARGE

OUR SPECIALS NIGHTS

MONDAY: ALL YOU CAN EAT FAJITAS \$22.50

TUESDAY: SCHNITZEL NIGHT \$21.50

WEDNESDAY: GROUPER NIGHT \$23.50

THURSDAY: ALL YOU CAN EAT BBQ RIBS \$23.50

FRIDAY: ALL YOU CAN EAT BBQ NIGHT \$23.50

SATURDAY: ALL YOU CAN EAT STEAK NIGHT \$25.50

RESERVATIONS CALL: +297 586 5420 WWW.BARNEYSARUBA.COM PALM BEACH 21 A NOORD

EMAIL: EAT@BARNEYSARUBA.COM, ALSO AVAILABLE FOR PRIVATE EVENTS



ALL YOU CAN EAT! BBQ buffet

FRIDAY & SUNDAY BBQ BUFFET

6 PM - 10 PM

All-you-can-eat ribs, beef skewers, sausage, grouper and shrimp. On the side: corn on the cob, Caribbean rice, potatoes, soups, sauces and a salad bar.

\$29.50 p.p.

BEACH SEATING

Located on the beach between Holiday Inn and Marriott's Surf Club, Palm Beach
T: +297 586 5365 - E: moombabeach@arubawineanddine.com - www.moombabeach.com

Moomba Beach BAR & RESTAURANT

ARUBA WINE & DINE

Venezuela's El Nacional newspaper to cease print edition

Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — Venezuela's last nationally circulated, anti-government newspaper will stop publishing its print edition amid unrelenting government pressure and paper shortages, editors said Thursday.

El Nacional's final edition will run Friday after 75 years in print. It will become an exclusively online publication.

Upon learning of the changes to come, editors and reporters in the Caracas newsroom said they were undaunted, ready to press ahead and continue bringing critical news to readers.

"They won't beat us. We're not defeated," said general manager Jorge Makrinotis, who recalled growing up with the paper in his family's home. "It's important to note that."

El Nacional is known for its harsh criticism of the government of Venezuela, a



A view of El Nacional's newsroom, Venezuela's last nationally circulated, opposition newspaper, in Caracas, Venezuela, Thursday, Dec. 13, 2018.

once-wealthy oil nation that has been plunged into economic turmoil under two decades of socialist rule.

Both the late President Hugo Chavez and his successor, Nicolas Maduro,

have had strained relations with the media and accused journalists of contributing to anti-government plots and publishing fake news.

El Nacional joins more than a dozen local newspapers

that in recent years have stopped circulating due to the lack of imported paper and the economic crisis striking media companies across the country.

"We've endured longer than the others," Miguel

Associated Press

Otero, El Nacional's president and CEO, told the Spanish newspaper ABC. "But in the end we could not persist."

Venezuelan journalists work under the threat of jail or crushing lawsuits, driving several abroad fearing for their personal safety. A pro-government constitutional assembly created last year has passed a law decreeing up to 20 years in prison for publishing material deemed hateful.

Journalists working at online news publications often complain of what they call government censorship done by blocking web searches through internet providers stopping readers from seeing their stories.

Since August, El Nacional had cut back from printing daily to just five days a week. The newspaper does not release its circulation numbers, but editors say their print readers have dramatically shrunk in the last several years. □

Mexico leader says he talked with Trump about migrants, jobs

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) —

Mexico's leftist President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador said he spoke by telephone Wednesday with U.S. President Donald Trump about migration and job creation.

The issue came to the fore last month when a caravan of about 7,000 migrants arrived in the border city of Tijuana and some attempted to enter the United States.

"In respectful and friendly terms, we spoke about the migration issue and the possibility of implementing a joint program of development and job creation in Central America and our country," Lopez Obrador wrote in his Twitter account. The Mexican president has called on the United States to join in a "Marshall Plan" effort to commit about \$20 billion in public and private investment in Central America to create jobs, so

people there won't have to emigrate.

Despite their differences in background and policy, the relationship between the two leaders has been quite cordial.

Lopez Obrador, who took office Dec. 1, has said he hopes to make migration a choice, not a necessity, for poor people of the region. Earlier Wednesday, Mexico's top security official said the government will close off illegal entries at

its southern border with Guatemala, but didn't say exactly how the country plans to accomplish that daunting task.

Interior Secretary Olga Sanchez Cordero said the new administration will end the practice of undocumented or illegal crossings over the Suchiate River, which marks much of the border between Mexico and Guatemala.

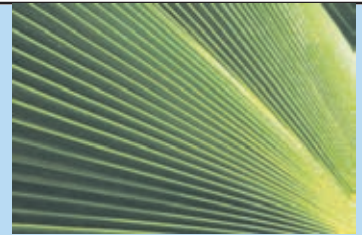
"In the south there will be only one entry, on the

bridge," she said.

"Anyone who wants to enter illegally, we are going to say: 'Get in line and you can enter our country.'"

Sanchez Cordero offered no details on how that would be done, however. In late October, Mexican authorities briefly tried to block a migrant caravan from crossing the river with ranks of police and military personnel, a helicopter and boats but the migrants crossed anyway. □

LOCAL



It's A Wrap



ORANJESTAD — Aruba Today will launch its very first video of the series 'Ask Pilar' on Monday, December 17th, 2018 at Facebook Aruba Today and on our website www.arubatoday.com. Let us introduce to you this fresh new project and the people behind the camera.

Why a video? Besides our free daily newspaper, our posts on Facebook and Instagram and our website content, we started evaluating the plans for short video's about a year ago. The concept was created by Aruba Today's Editor-in-Chief Linda Reijnders to add variation to Aruba Today. "There is more to this island than palm trees and beaches, and

in our videos we wish to inform and educate the visitor by showing local places of any kind. We are all new to this, but goal is not to deliver a technical perfect result, moreover motivate with the content and topic as well as the good energy coming from it." Aruba Today will publish two or more videos per week and the concept will be interactive_ meaning that as the title of the video 'Ask Pilar' already reveals, the viewer has the tool to actually ask about the topics shown or maybe even suggest a location/topic for a video. Just ask our host Pilar through Facebook comments or messenger.



THE TEAM

Pilar Flores, 33 years old, is the jolly Video Host of 'Ask Pilar'. She loves doing the videos because she gets to meet a lot of nice people and know many interesting places. "I hope with it that people will get to know and love Aruba the way us locals do." Flores is the Executive Editor at Bon Dia Newspaper, Aruba Today's sister, where she is fond of being up to date on all the current happenings and having the inside scoop. She has a Bachelor of Theology, achieved in Aberdeen, Scotland and a Masters of Applied Ethics in Utrecht, The Netherlands. "In my leisure time I like to walk in Arikok National park, play with my three cats, color and spend time with my boyfriend."

The one capturing the images with his camera and editing them into the end result is our videographer, Juan Luis Pinto Sotter, a Marketing major at the University of Aruba. "I chose marketing because I wanted a career that kept me physically and mentally active. As a junior marketer there is a lot of moving around, I can't begin to imagine

what the real world will be like." His hobbies include photography, gaming, and working on his car. "I am not a car mechanic, however YouTube helps a lot and I find it very therapeutic to put everything aside and work on this piece of metal that helps me move long distances." Juan Luis loves to capture moments with his camera and edits them into a dynamic video. Video Director of 'Ask Pilar' is Linda Reijnders, working in this current position since July 2017 and previous to that, she spent six years with the local newspaper in Dutch, Amigoe di Aruba as a journalist and Editor-in-Chief of the magazine H&H. "I love working in the media, I love to write, create, connect, inform and educate. Working with young, talented and motivated people like Juan Luis and Pilar is a blessing to me. We really enjoy making these Aruba Peeks and we for sure hope that rubs off to the viewer." Check us out on Facebook Aruba Today or the website www.arubatoday.com and do not forget to like and share! Thank you for your support. □

Fashion on the Catwalk

ORANJESTAD — Once a year, our beautiful island becomes a giant runway, showcasing the most incredible creations by fashion designers from Aruba and all over the world. Aruba's Fashion & Luxury Tourism Week is an international event held annually in the paradisiacal island of Aruba to effectively invite High Profile Travelers and offer them an unforgettable 3-Day fashion & luxury travel Experience in Aruba. Tonight is the first night in a row of three. Make sure you take your seat and enjoy the view.



Designer Michell Reynoso



Designer Giannina Azar



Designer Maru Jordan



Design Pineapples Don't Have Sleeves



At 6 PM the show will start at the pier of Renaissance's Marketplace. Runway line-up for tonight is: future designers, PATILLA SWIMWEAR, P.D.H.S. and CARMEN STEFENS. From 9.30 on the music lineup will present ESHA LIVE and DJANE MAJO.

Tomorrow, Saturday December 15th, LABELLAMAFIA, SIMILARES / ANDREA GRADOS, CARLOS NIETO and AGUA BENDITA will show their collection on the runway between 6 and 10 PM, after music will be performed by HOMEYPOT LIVE and DJANE MAJO. Same location at Renaissance Marketplace pier. The last day is Sunday December 16th and that day the catwalk will be taken between 6 and 10 PM by designers and brands DANIELLA BATLLE, BAHAMAMAMA, OLGA BOLAÑOS and GIANNINA AZAR. Music performances from 10 PM by DJ DANVILLE and MR FELLOW.

Please check out more information on Facebook Aruba Fashion Week or the website www.arubafashionweek.com. □



**1,200,000
CHRISTMAS
POINT GIVEAWAY**

NOVEMBER 30 - DECEMBER 23, 2018

12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS
Play every Friday, Saturday and Sunday.
100,000 POINTS AWARDED EACH DAY!
Ten daily winners of 10,000 points!
Earn 25 points or 4 table credits and swipe at any kiosk to play. Play up to five times each day.
See Players' Club for details.

**50/30
Friday!**

We're giving away
\$50 Free Slot Play to
lucky slot and table game
players every 30 minutes
from 7pm to midnight!

**THE SHOPS
AT ALHAMBRA CASINO**

Offering a wide variety of
Retail & Dining Outlets,
Salon & Spa Services,
Souvenirs and more.



Alhambra
CASINO AND SHOPS

Open daily 10am to 4am | J.E. Irausquin Blvd #47
583.5000 | casinoalhambra.com

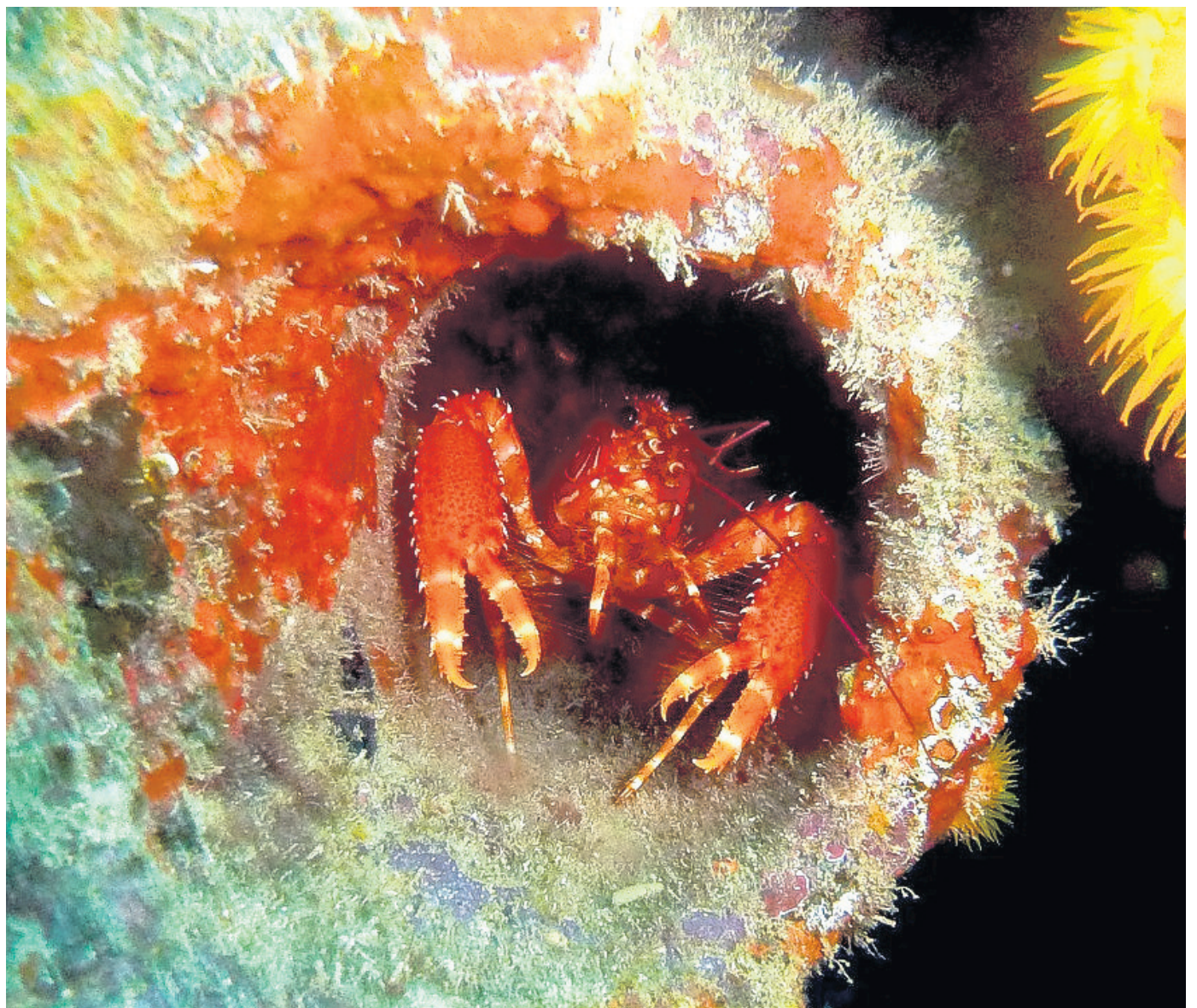
Aruba to Me

ORANJESTAD – We would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory.

Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation.

Last but not least: check out our website and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again. □



The Nutcracker hosted by Kozlov Dance Academy



ORANJESTAD — It's that time of the year again, Kozlov Dance academy is ready to present to you this wonderful show 'The Nutcracker'.

The Nutcracker is one of the most beautiful, theatrical, staged ballets. The popularity



of the ballet is immense and it provides an unforgettable spark to everyone's holiday season. The ballerinas are very busy rehearsing in the studio. They are ready to give you a magnificent show. The dedication, energy and passion they put into this show is admirable.

Come see all the talented students on stage at Cas di Cultura (Aruba's cultural house) in Oranjestad on Saturday December 15th at 7 PM or Sunday December 16th at 5 PM. For more information check out their facebook page Kozlov Dance Academy. □

The Aruba Tourism Authority honor loyal visitors on the island



PALM BEACH — Recently, Kimberley Richardson of the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure to honor Aruba's loyal and friendly visitors as Goodwill Ambassador and Emerald Ambassador. The Goodwill Ambassador is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism, as

a token of appreciation to the guests who visit Aruba 20 years and more consecutively. The Emerald Ambassador is presented to guests who visit Aruba 35 years and more consecutively.

The honorees are Dave and Adrienne McGill from Arizona, Andras and Elizabeth Piczer from Ohio, and Ken and Linda Thomas.

These lovely couples stated that they love the island very much, especially for the nice sandy beaches, delicious variety of foods, and Aruba's warm and friendly people.

Ms. Richardson together with the representatives of the Costa Linda Beach Resort presented the certificate to the honorees, and also handed over some presents and thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination and as their home away from home. □



SPORTS



Retired NHL hockey referee Paul Stewart poses with his plaque before being inducted into the U.S. Hockey Hall of Fame, Wednesday, Dec. 12, 2018, in Nashville, Tenn.

Associated Press

Former referee Paul Stewart wants women officiating in NHL

By TERESA M. WALKER

AP Sports Writer

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Paul Stewart has a very big goal for the next stage of his already lengthy hockey career, and that's helping women follow in his footsteps by officiating in the NHL. Stewart, being inducted Wednesday night into the U.S. Hockey Hall of Fame, said Katie Guay will be working the upcoming Beanpot tournament in Boston after being an official at the 2018 Winter Olympics. Stewart, who refereed 1,010 NHL regular-season games, 49 Stanley Cup playoff games and two NHL All-Star Games, says he had a small part in helping Guay. "I want to see someone break that glass ceiling," Stewart said. "It doesn't take an X or Y chromosome to put your arm in the air and call a penalty. It only takes brains and guts. And that's it. My next goal is to have lots of great women officiating."

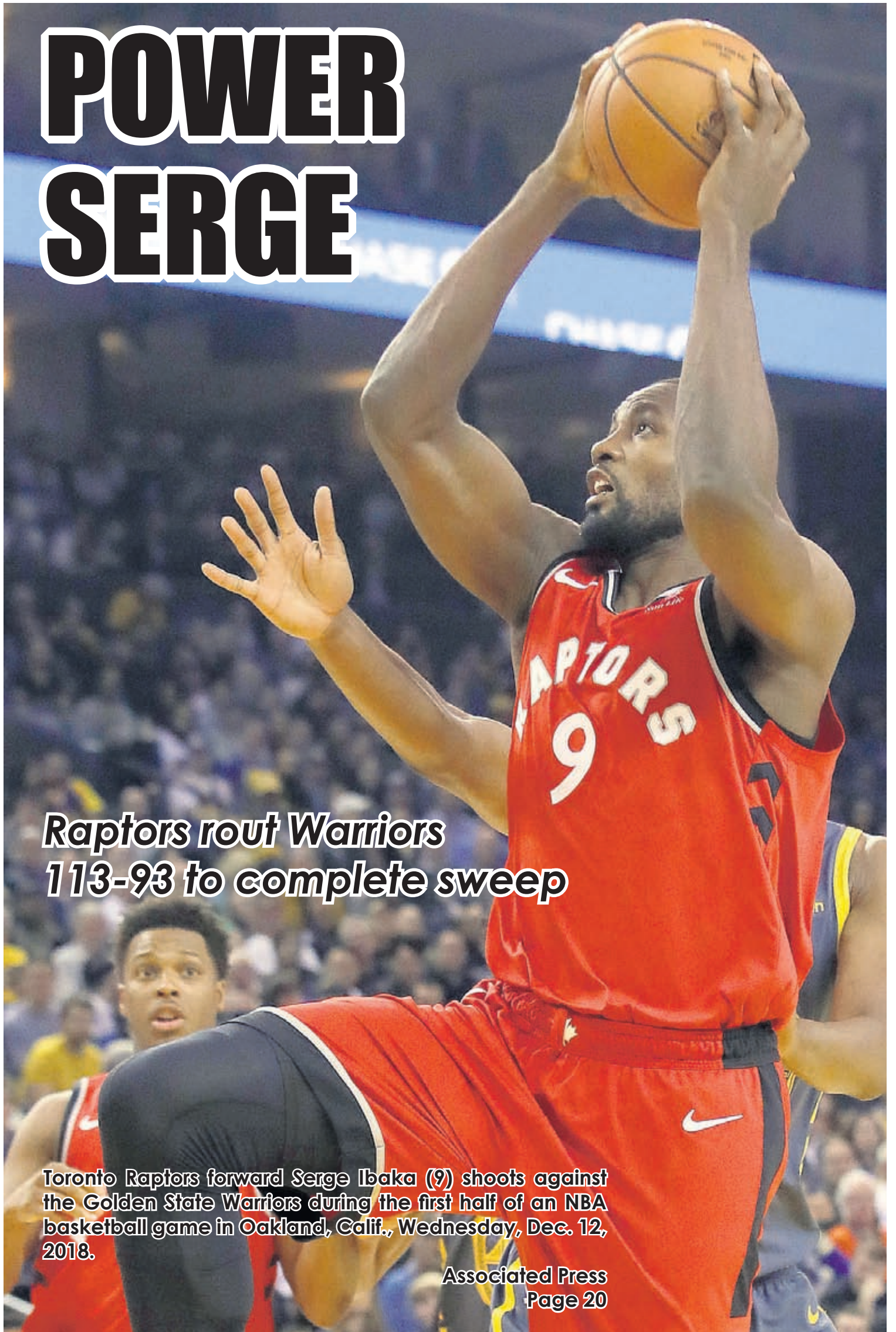
Continued on Page 23

POWER SERGE

Raptors rout Warriors 113-93 to complete sweep

Toronto Raptors forward Serge Ibaka (9) shoots against the Golden State Warriors during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Oakland, Calif., Wednesday, Dec. 12, 2018.

Associated Press
Page 20



Free agent reliever Familia reaches deal to return to Mets

By **BEN WALKER**
AP Baseball Writer

LAS VEGAS (AP) — The revamped New York Mets bullpen is set to include a very familiar face — long-time reliever Jeurys Familia. Familia reached agreement on a \$30 million, three-year deal late Wednesday night with the team that traded him away last summer. The contract won't be complete until he passes a physical.

The 29-year-old righty will join a Mets bullpen that recently added major league saves leader Edwin Diaz in a trade with Seattle that also netted longtime All-Star second baseman Robinson Cano, a move made by new general manager Brodie Van Wagenen. Before leaving the winter meetings Thursday, Van Wagenen said the Mets liked Familia because of his "age, performance, repertoire and comfort being able to handle our market." The GM said he also thought Familia would be a good influence on Diaz. Familia had spent his entire career with New York before being traded to Oakland last July. This move



In this May 18, 2018, file photo, New York Mets pitcher Jeurys Familia (27) delivers against the Arizona Diamondbacks during the ninth inning of a baseball game in New York.

Associated Press

likely means Familia will slide back into a setup role, where he flourished as a rookie in 2014.

Familia was a combined 8-6 with 18 saves in 24 chances and a 3.13 ERA for the Mets and A's last season. He has 123 career saves for the

Mets, who signed him at age 17. Craig Kimbrel, Andrew Miller, Adam Ottavino and David Robertson are among the other relievers on the free-agent market. Van Wagenen said the Mets would like to add a lefty but didn't anticipate

it being a high-priced one. "Would we play on multiple, high-end arms in the bullpen?" he said. "I don't think that's part of our strategy at this point." The Mets, looking to bounce back from consecutive losing seasons, are hoping for

a quick turnaround with Van Wagenen in charge. They still want to upgrade all over the diamond, and he said they made progress at the meetings.

"I know we wanted to be busy, we were," he said. Familia posted 43 saves in 2015 when the Mets made it to the World Series. He led the majors with a franchise-record 51 saves the following year and was an All-Star, again helping New York reach the playoffs. Familia served a 15-game suspension at the start of 2017 for violating Major League Baseball's domestic violence policy. Later that year, he had a blood clot that required surgery and finished 2-2 with a 4.38 ERA and six saves in 26 games. Last season, he was 4-4 with a 2.88 ERA and 17 saves in 21 chances with the Mets. He struck out 43 and walked 14 in 40 appearances covering 40 2/3 innings. The Mets got two minor leaguers from Oakland for Familia, acquiring Triple-A righty Bobby Wahl and Class A third baseman Will Toffey, and \$1 million in international signing bonus pool allotment. □

Negro Leagues bobbleheads part of fundraising campaign

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Fans of the former Negro Leagues are being asked to help a campaign to create bobbleheads of 30 stars from the league — with a goal of commemorating the league's upcoming centennial. Organizers of the effort, which was unveiled Wednesday, have created a team of 30 Negro Leagues stars who would be honored with bobbleheads if the campaign raises enough money. The first bobblehead of pitcher Satchel Paige of the Kansas City Monarchs has already been produced. The Paige bobblehead stands on a baseball-shaped base in front of a replica of the Kansas City YMCA at 18th Street and the Paseo, where the Negro National League was organized on Feb. 13, 1920, The



This Wednesday, Dec. 12, 2018, photo provided by the National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum and Dreams Fulfilled, LLC, shows bobbleheads of former Negro League pitcher Satchel Paige of the Kansas City Monarchs on display at the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum in Kansas City, Mo.

Associated Press

Kansas City Star reported. Production of the rest of the licensed, limited-edition bobbleheads will depend on a Kickstarter campaign launched Wednesday by the National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum and Dreams Fulfilled, which was formed to promote the Negro League centennial. "The Negro Leagues Centennial Team series will bring long overdue recognition to players who were not only among the best to play the game, but also early civil rights pioneers who helped pave the way for integration in baseball and the country," Dreams Fulfilled founder Jay Caldwell said in a statement. The goal is to raise \$10,000 by Jan. 7. Any donation is welcome but those who give \$20 or more will get first choice and better pricing for the

bobbleheads, which will be individually numbered up to 2,020. The bobblehead series is licensed by the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum in Kansas City. Museum President Bob Kendrick and Caldwell on Wednesday announced the African-American and Hispanic players selected for the Centennial Team. They played between 1895 to 1947, when Jackie Robinson became the first African-American in the major leagues. "This is really important because not only is it a way to perpetuate the legacy of the Negro leagues but it's such a tremendous way to educate the public about these legendary athletes who the majority of people have no idea about," Kendrick said. □

Nosek helps Golden Knights beat Islanders 3-2

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Tomas Nosek scored the tiebreaking goal early in the third period and the surging Vegas Golden Knights beat the New York Islanders 3-2 on Wednesday night.

Jonathan Marchessault and William Karlsson also scored to help the Golden Knights win for the 10th time in 13 games. Marc-Andre Fleury, making his 11th straight start, stopped 23 shots to take over the NHL victory lead with 18.

Anthony Beauvillier and Adam Pelech scored for New York. The Islanders have lost six of eight. Robin Lehner finished with 14 saves to fall to 0-4-2 in his last seven appearances.

Nosek put Vegas ahead when he jumped on the rebound of a shot by Oscar Lindberg and put it in for his third 3:32 into the third.

BLACKHAWKS 6, PENGUINS 3

CHICAGO (AP) — Jonathan Toews had a goal and two assists, and the Blackhawks snapped an eight-game losing streak.

Marcus Kruger, Brent Seabrook, Andreas Martinsen, Brandon Saad each had a goal and an assist for Chicago. Alex DeBrincat scored a power-play goal, and Corey Crawford made 40 saves.

Toews became the 16th active player to reach 700 career points with the same franchise. He assisted on Saad's empty-netter for his 701st point.

Kruger snapped a 3-all tie when he beat Casey DeSmith from the front of the crease 3:49 into the third period.

Bryan Rust scored three times for Pittsburgh in his second career hat trick.

DeSmith blocked 23 shots in his sixth straight start.

FLAMES 6, FLYERS 5, OT

CALGARY, Alberta (AP) — Johnny Gaudreau scored 35 seconds into overtime, lifting the Flames to the win.

Calgary trailed 5-3 before Sean Monahan and Rasmus Andersson scored in the final 68 seconds of third period. Gaudreau then secured the Flames' sixth win in seven games with his 13th goal of the season.

Matthew Tkachuk had four assists for the Flames (20-10-2), who leapfrogged idle Nashville for the top spot in the Western Conference. Monahan had two goals and an assist, and Gaudreau and Mark Giordano each had a goal and two assists.

Philadelphia (12-13-4) lost for the third time in four games. Sean Couturier had two goals and an assist for the Flyers in his return to the lineup after missing two games with a lower-body injury.

Travis Sanheim, James van Riemsdyk and Dale Weise also scored.

DUCKS 6, STARS 3

ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP) — Ondrej Kase scored three times for Anaheim in his first NHL hat trick, and Brandon Montour had four points in the third period.

Anaheim trailed 3-2 midway through the third before scoring three goals in a three-minute span for its fifth win in six games.

Kase pounced on a loose puck in front and put it past Ben Bishop at 10:45. Montour, who also had three assists, gave Anaheim the lead 81 seconds later when he had a wide-open net after Bishop was knocked down by one of his own players.

Miro Heiskanen, Blake Comeau and Alexander Radulov scored for Dallas, which has dropped its last two after winning four straight. Bishop made 30 saves. □



New York Islanders right wing Cal Clutterbuck (15) plays the puck against Vegas Golden Knights left wing Tomas Nosek during the second period of an NHL hockey game, Wednesday, Dec. 12, 2018, in New York.

Associated Press

**THE ONLY AND AUTHENTIC
MEXICAN
RESTAURANT IN ARUBA!**

**Experience the Best Mexican Food,
Drinks and Fiesta in the Caribbean!**

OPEN 7 days a week From 5:00 p.m. until...

FREE
Appetizer and
shot with your
dinner!

**CHIHUAHUA'S
FIESTA & GRILL
ARUBA**

For Reservations:
00297-5867070
00297-7427387

Located:
**South Beach Center
(Behind Hooters)**

tripadvisor

Like us on
facebook

Lowry, Ibaka lead Raptors to 113-93 rout of Warriors



Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry, bottom, dribbles under Toronto Raptors guard Kyle Lowry (7) during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Oakland, Calif., Wednesday, Dec. 12, 2018.

Associated Press

By The Associated Press
OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — Kyle Lowry had 23 points and 12 assists to lead a balanced Toronto offense while leading scorer Kawhi Leonard sat out, Serge Ibaka added 20 points and the Raptors dominated Golden State from the start, beating the Warriors 113-93 on Wednesday night to complete a season sweep. Danny Green scored 15 points, Pascal Siakam had 13 and Fred VanVleet added 10 to help the Raptors improve to an NBA-best 23-7, matching the best start in franchise history. They did it despite not having Leonard for a second consecutive night. Toronto's star forward has a sore right hip and was ruled out less than 30 minutes before tip-off. It was Toronto's first win in Oakland since Feb. 8, 2004. Kevin Durant had 30 points, seven rebounds and five assists for Golden State. The Warriors had won four straight heading into a much-anticipated showdown between two teams many expect to reach the

NBA Finals.

CELTICS 130, WIZARDS 125 WASHINGTON (AP) — Kyrie Irving scored Boston's last 12 points, including back-to-back 3-pointers in the final 40 seconds of overtime to outduel John Wall in a point-guard showdown, and the Celtics extended their winning streak to seven games. Irving finished with 38 points and seven assists. Marcus Morris added 27 points and nine rebounds for Boston, which played without Al Horford, Gordon Hayward and Jaylen Brown — its Nos. 4-6 leading scorers. Wall returned for the Wizards after missing a game with an aching left heel and finished with 34 points with 13 assists. But his seven points in OT weren't enough to keep pace with fellow All-Star Irving. Bradley Beal and Jeff Green each added 22 points and Kelly Oubre Jr. scored 20 for Washington.

PACERS 113, BUCKS 97 INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Thaddeus Young had 25 points, 11 rebounds and four assists, and Myles Turner added 23 points to lead Indiana to its fifth straight win. Indiana pulled within a half-game of the Central Division-leading Bucks. Eric Bledsoe scored 26 points and Malcolm Brogdon finished with 15 to lead Milwaukee. Giannis Antetokounmpo had a season-low 12 points, grabbed 10 rebounds and dealt out seven assists after missing Monday's game at Cleveland with a sore neck. Indiana's Victor Oladipo wound up with 12 points, 10 rebounds and six assists after missing 11 games with a sore right knee.

CAVALIERS 113, KNICKS 106 CLEVELAND (AP) — Jordan Clarkson scored 28 points and a basket by Rodney Hood in the fourth quarter gave Cleveland a late lead as the Cavaliers dealt New York its fifth straight loss. Hood put the Cavaliers in front 107-106 with 23 seconds remaining after New York took a one-point lead on rookie Kevin Knox's fast-break dunk with 32 seconds left. Hood added 23 points,

rookie Collin Sexton scored 19 and Matthew Dellavedova, playing his first him game for Cleveland since being re-acquired from Milwaukee, had 15 points. Enes Kanter and Tim Hardaway each scored 20 points for New York.
HORNETS 108, PISTONS 107 CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — Jeremy Lamb hit a 22-foot jumper from the right wing with 0.3 seconds left, and Charlotte Hornets rallied from a late 10-point deficit for a wild win. Lamb's buzzer-beater came with controversy. As he released the ball, Malik Monk ran off the Hornets' bench and onto the floor early to celebrate the made basket. Officials reviewed the play and called one-shot technical on the Hornets for having six men on the court. The basket counted. The Pistons made the technical free throw, but the ensuing inbounds pass was intercepted. Kemba Walker finished with 31 points, nine assists and eight rebounds for the Hornets, who won their third straight and moved into sixth place in the Eastern Conference — a half-game ahead of Detroit. Blake Griffin had 26 points, 10 rebounds and seven assists for the Pistons, who have lost six in a row.

NETS 127, 76ers 124 PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Spencer Dinwiddie scored a career-high 39 points off the bench and Allen Crabbe had 20 to lead Brooklyn. Joel Embiid had 33 points and 17 rebounds and Ben Simmons scored 22 for Philadelphia, which played without Jimmy Butler because of a strained groin. Joe Harris had 14 points for Brooklyn, which notched its second victory over Philadelphia in three meetings.
GRIZZLIES 92, TRAIL BLAZERS 83 MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — Mike Conley scored 23 points and keyed a fourth-quarter outburst as Memphis snapped a two-game losing streak.

Jaren Jackson Jr. finished with 14 points, and MarShon Brooks added 13 for the Grizzlies. □

Celebrate

the MOST Wonderful TIME of the YEAR

At The Orchid Casino

SPIN TO WIN 2X A WEEK!!

In December every Friday & Sunday from 7pm till 11pm we will have Random Picks!

Every 30 minutes a customer playing slot machine will be picked to Spin the Wheel to **Win!** Awesome Prizes!!

More than \$1000,- in SLOT PLAY plus Weekend Stay, F&B Vouchers & X-MAS Baskets!!!

For complete rules and details, see or contact the Players Club desk at 525-7777 Ext. 209. Follow us on Facebook: Orchid Casino at Riu Antillas Aruba. Offer is valid for Players Club Members Only. Winner must be present. Must be age 18 to Play. Management reserves the right to change or cancel promotion without notice.

Jets' well-traveled Roberts hopes to book trip to Pro Bowl

By DENNIS WASZAK Jr.
AP Pro Football Writer
FLORHAM PARK, N.J. (AP)

— Andre Roberts is a travelin' man whose passions include hitting the links at golf courses all over the world.

You name a destination and there's a good chance the New York Jets kick returner has been there. After all, Roberts has visited all seven continents.

Yes, even Antarctica.

There's one place, though, he has never been: the Pro Bowl. But Roberts is doing all he can to book a trip there this season.

"Yeah, I think I'm a Pro Bowl-caliber returner," Roberts said. "I've done well this year. I'm tops in the league in a lot of categories, so I think I've done a good job this year." That's an understatement. Roberts leads the NFL in punt return average (15.3 yards) among qualified players, and is tops in the league with 841 yards on kick returns. He also has eight returns of 40 or more yards — five on kickoffs and three on punts — while the next-closest player has no more than three.

"I don't know too many returners in this league that are dual returners that have done what he's done this year," special teams coordinator Brant Boyer said.

"You have some guys that are slightly better on kick return or whatever. But if you look at the dual stats and



In this Sunday, Dec. 9, 2018, file photo, New York Jets' Andre Roberts (19) runs with the ball during the first half of an NFL football game against the Buffalo Bills in Orchard Park, N.Y.

Associated Press

what he's done this year, I don't think there's a better returner in the game."

Roberts has stabilized what has been a position of flux the past few years as the Jets tried the likes of Kalif Raymond, JoJo Natson, ArDarius Stewart, Jalin Marshall, Nick Marshall, Jeremy Ross and C.J. Spiller in the return game.

None could provide a consistently reliable option on special teams. The Jets signed Roberts in the off-season, and the 30-year-old veteran has been a big-time spark.

"Yeah, special teams has kept me in the league,"

Roberts said. "And you know teams have seen that I can do the return stuff at a high level, so I still feel like I'm ascending. Age ain't nothin' but a number, but I feel good right now and hope I can just keep going." Roberts is a free agent after the season and there's uncertainty as to the futures of both coach Todd Bowles and general manager Mike Maccagnan. But, Roberts, who is also a part of the offense as a wide receiver, has proven himself to be a key contributor for the Jets this season. He had a 78-yard punt return for a touchdown in

the season opener, and has been on the verge of scoring several times since on both punt and kickoff returns.

"He's been great for us," special teams standout Terrence Brooks said. "When he hits those holes, he just goes. We love blocking for him, man. We want to get him in the end zone. It's been a while, but we're going to try to get another one before the season ends."

Roberts has three punt returns for touchdowns in his career, with the other two coming in 2016 with Detroit. He also brought back

a kickoff for a score with Washington in 2015. He has been a consistent return threat since his college days at The Citadel, and was drafted by Arizona in the third round in 2010.

He has not been as much of a factor in the passing game as he was early in his career with the Cardinals and Redskins, but has certainly found his niche in the league. "I still play receiver," Roberts said, "but I definitely embrace the role and I feel very comfortable with it and I'm making it my life now." So is traveling, something not unexpected from a guy who grew up in a military family with both parents serving in the U.S. Army. He was born in Alaska, and moved to places such as Texas, South Carolina and St. Croix — after his parents were deployed to South Korea. "I moved around a little bit," he said with a smile. "I've heard others do a lot more than that, but it's been fun."

The travel bug was ingrained in him at an early age, so he has always wanted to explore. He set a personal goal of seeing all seven continents — North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia and Antarctica — by the time he turned 30.

Mission accomplished. Larry Fitzgerald, his buddy and former Cardinals teammate, joined him on several of the trips — including to Antarctica in 2013. □

NFL to play 4 games in London, 1 in Mexico City in 2019

NEW YORK (AP) — The NFL will stage four games in London and one in Mexico City next season, with the Jaguars, Chargers, Rams, Raiders and Buccaneers serving as hosts.

When the games will be played and who the opponents will be won't be announced until the spring, when the league schedule for 2019 is released.

The Jaguars have a deal to play annually in London. The Chargers, Rams and Raiders are considered to be playing in temporary

stadiums — the Los Angeles teams will move into a new facility being built in Inglewood that won't be ready next year — and the Raiders will be leaving Oakland for Las Vegas in 2020.

Days after the Chiefs-Rams game scheduled for Azteca Stadium was moved to Los Angeles because of poor field conditions in November, the NFL announced it would be returning to play a regular-season game in Mexico City in 2019.

This season had three

games at Wembley Stadium in London — one of those was scheduled for Tottenham's new stadium, but was switched to Wembley because the Spurs' building was not ready. Previously, the NFL announced that two of the 2019 London games would be at Wembley, the other two at Tottenham. Earlier this year, the Seahawks beat the Raiders 27-3, the Chargers defeated the Titans 20-19, and the Eagles beat the Jaguars 24-18.

The NFL has played regular-season games in London since 2007. It played one in Mexico City in 2005, then not again until 2016 and '17.

"Our league's global presence continues to grow and expand through the success of the NFL International Series and we look forward to showcasing the Buccaneers organization to an international audience," said Brian Ford, the team's chief operating officer.

The Bucs agreed to par-

ticipate in an international game as part of their bid to host the Super Bowl in 2021. They've played twice in London, losing to the Patriots in 2009 and Bears in 2011. "I've been associated with games out of the country before," coach Dirk Koetter said, "and when you get to them, I think the players do enjoy that week. Trips are long, usually you're rewarded on the back end with your bye week. Once you're over there, it's football. It's new and it's different." □

Belgium into first Hockey World Cup semis; Dutch reach again

BHUBANESWAR, India (AP)

— Belgium came from behind to beat Germany 2-1 and reach the field hockey World Cup semifinals for the first time on Thursday. Also, the Netherlands beat tournament host India 2-1 to face defending two-time champion Australia. Belgium will play England in the other semifinal on Saturday.

Dieter Linnekogel scored at the end of the first quarter for Germany but Alexander Hendrickx leveled for Belgium in the second from a penalty corner.

Tom Boon, one of seven Rio de Janeiro Olympic silver medallists in the lineup, scored the winner 10 minutes from time.

The Netherlands-India quarterfinal played out the same way.

India scored early thanks



Netherlands players, in orange, celebrate scoring a goal during the Men's Hockey World Cup quarterfinal match between India and Netherlands at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, India, Thursday, Dec. 13, 2018.

Associated Press

to Akashdeep Singh's penalty corner, and the Netherlands was quick to level, through Thierry Brinkman's field goal.

Like Belgium again, the Dutch winner came 10 minutes from the end, to specialist Mink van der Weerden off a corner.

The European champion Netherlands and top-ranked Australia face each other on Saturday, four years after meeting in the final at The Hague, where the Kookaburras humbled the Dutch 6-1.

Both are three-time world champions. □

World swim body fights back launching new elite series



Gold medalist and world record holder Russia's Kirill Prigoda poses during ceremonies at the men's 200m breaststroke during the 14th FINA World Swimming Championships in Hangzhou in eastern China's Zhejiang Province on Thursday, Dec. 13, 2018.

Associated Press

LAUSANNE, Switzerland (AP) — Under pressure from a privately run rival competition and a class action suit by Olympic and world champion swimmers, FINA has pledged to start a new elite race series.

The three meetings next March to May will in-

vite Olympic and world champs, world record-holders, and top-ranked swimmers in four-lane races, FINA said on Thursday. The "FINA Champions Swim Series" will pay \$3.9 million in total prize money — almost double the prize fund for the 25-meter pool world

championships currently being staged in China.

"By creating this additional elite competition, FINA will generate a true swimming show, where sport presentation and stars' promotion are key concepts for a successful meet," its president, Julio Maglione, said in a



Romania's Simona Halep clenches her fist after defeating Spain's Garbine Muguruza during their semifinal match at the French Open tennis tournament in Paris on June 7, 2018. Halep won 6-1, 6-4.

Associated Press

Top-ranked Djokovic, Halep honored by ITF as World Champions

LONDON (AP) — Novak Djokovic and Simona Halep were named the 2018 World Champions by the International Tennis Federation on Thursday after each won Grand Slam titles and finished the year atop the world rankings. Djokovic, recognized by the ITF for the sixth time, won the Wimbledon and U.S. Open titles a year after undergoing surgery on his right elbow.

"I am particularly proud of this achievement after all that I've been through physically this year, but part of me always believed I could make it back to the top," Djokovic says.

Halep, who won the French Open in June, earned the honor for the first time despite being unable to compete at the WTA Finals because of a back injury.

"To be recognized in this way is really special and provides extra motivation to keep working for next season," Halep says.

Mike Bryan and Jack Sock were named the winners in men's doubles, and Barbora Krejčíková and Katerina Siniakova claimed the women's doubles honor.

The champions are determined by the ITF according to a system that weighs each player's results during the calendar year. □

statement. FINA announced the plan days after three top swimmers filed an antitrust suit in a Californian court against the Switzerland-based swim body's alleged anti-competitive practices.

It was filed on behalf of Hungarian great Katinka Hosszu and two Americans, Olympic gold medalist Tom Shields and world champion Michael Andrew after FINA threatened to ban swimmers who compete in events linked to the proposed International Swimming League.

The privately owned league, backed by Moscow-based businessman Konstantin Grigorisin, aims

to operate outside FINA's control, involve athletes in decision making, and pay higher prize money.

"ISL takes swimmers seriously, not like FINA," Hosszu said last Friday.

In a FINA statement on Thursday, another Olympic gold medalist who chairs its athletes commission praised the new competition. "We will present swimming under a new perspective," said Penny Heyns, a double Olympic champion for South Africa at the 1996 Atlanta Games. "Finally, with this unprecedented level of prize money, our swimming stars will definitively be attracted by this circuit." □

Paul Stewart

Continued from Page 17

Stewart joined David Poile, general manager of the NHL's Nashville Predators, three-time Olympic medalist and U.S. national team captain Natalie Darwitz, former Michigan coach Red Berenson and the late Leland "Hago" Harrington being inducted. NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman also presented the 2018 Lester Patrick Award to the late Jim Johansson.

Darwitz, who currently coaches Division III Hamline in St. Paul, Minnesota, said women being officials in the NHL is possible. She said she couldn't shoot a puck like a man or skate as fast but believe women could be referees. She mentioned Guay and Kristine Langley, who's currently a referee for men's game at the D-III level.

"If you know the game well enough, that's certainly a huge possibility that could happen in the future," Darwitz said. "And I would love to see that."

Five women took part in the NHL's officiating combine in Buffalo in August, one more than 2017. Stephen

Walkom, the NHL's director of officiating, told The Associated Press in September that the league is open to anyone testing themselves at the combine and the pool is growing with more women playing hockey.

What the NHL is looking for in officials applies to men and women. Walkom said qualities need include being an exceptional skater to keep up with the pace of play, and Bettman told the AP that being as qualified as other candidates is the key.

"I don't view any limitations in our ability to continue to attract knowledgeable, smart, hard-working professionals, whether they're male or female," Bettman said. Talking about being inducted, Stewart got emotional and teared up. The man who had 288 penalty minutes in 65 games played in the WHA and NHL joked he felt like he'd had an onion in his face all day. "You've seen a side of me not a lot of players ever saw," Stewart said. "I used to make them cry."

The induction ceremony was a sellout event Wednesday night at a ho-



From left, former Michigan coach Red Berenson, three-time Olympic medalist Natalie Darwitz, Nashville Predators general manager David Poile and retired NHL hockey referee Paul Stewart pose with their plaques before being inducted into the U.S. Hockey Hall of Fame, Wednesday, Dec. 12, 2018, in Nashville, Tenn.

tel a couple blocks from the Predators' arena thanks to Poile, the man who built Nashville's NHL franchise from the ground up as an expansion franchise. Poile, already the NHL's longest-tenured and winningest general manager, currently is in his 37th straight season after spending his first 15 with Washington.

Poile also was general manager of the 2014 U.S. Olympic men's team and associate general manager for the 2010 team that

won silver in Vancouver.

"I'm a lucky guy," Poile said. "I was born into a hockey family, so I have no regrets and I have no complaints."

Being inducted in the same year that the U.S. women won Olympic gold for the first time in 20 years made this even more special for Darwitz. The youngest ever player named to the U.S. women's national team at 15, she wound up captain of the U.S. women's national team from 2007-10 and

won Olympic silver in 2002 and 2010 and bronze in 2006. "Hopefully in 10 years or less than that another female's getting inducted, and they're like 'Oh, I know that name,' and it's a household name versus a lot of Minnesotans know my name," Darwitz said. "They might not know my name in Nashville or Michigan, but if they follow women's hockey they certainly know my name. Hopefully that trend continues in women's hockey." □

Associated Press

Stars & Stripes Team USA launches all-American cup challenge

By **BERNIE WILSON**

AP Sports Writer

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Stars & Stripes Team USA has been accepted as a challenger for the 2021 America's Cup, promising to have an all-American squad in a competition where nationality has mattered little in recent decades.

The name is a nod to Dennis Conner, who won the America's Cup four times, the final two with boats named Stars & Stripes.

Stars & Stripes Team USA was co-founded by professional sailors Taylor Canfield, one of the world's top match-racing skippers, and Mike Buckley.

The team is backed by the Long Beach Yacht Club, which hosts the prestigious Congressional Cup match-racing regatta. Canfield has won the Congressional

Cup four times in the last five years.

Stars & Stripes Team USA is the fifth challenger to be accepted by the Royal New Zealand Yacht Club for the 36th America's Cup in Auckland. It joins Challenger of Record Luna Rossa of Italy, the New York Yacht Club's American Magic, INEOS Team UK and Malta Altus Challenge in the group that will contend for the Prada Cup and the right to face Emirates Team New Zealand in the America's Cup match.

Canfield, 29, said the goal is to have an all-American effort, from the design team to the builders to the sailors. "There are a lot of great sailors in this country, so there's no doubt we can put a great team together," Canfield said.

Buckley, 36, said that when

he began doing research on former American challengers, he found that Conner had appeared on the cover of Time and Sports Illustrated in the 1980s.

"I was absolutely stunned and I realized that what was missing was this authentic story," Buckley said. "Why hasn't that happened recently? Dennis used to have an all-American challenge. ... When we decided to do this, that was one of the driving factors. It's not about Mike or Taylor. Let's do this for American sailing and America in general, so that people get inspired."

The 167-year-old America's Cup originally was viewed as "friendly competition between foreign countries," but nationality rules have been obliterated in recent decades. Although Oracle Team USA won the

America's Cup in 2010 and 2013, there were few Americans on the crew.

While the New York Yacht Club's American Magic is led by skipper Terry Hutchinson of Annapolis, Maryland, the helmsman is New Zealander Dean Barker and there are other international sailors on the crew.

Canfield said he and Buckley first started talking about doing a campaign after Emirates Team New Zealand upset Oracle Team USA in Bermuda in June 2017, ending tech billionaire Larry Ellison's grip on the Auld Mug.

Conner, whose last America's Cup victory came in 1988 with an all-American crew, declined to comment. Bill Koch won the oldest trophy in international sports in 1992 with a crew he believed to be all-Amer-

ican, although one sailor who was living in the United States at the time was Canadian.

"I really enjoyed having what I thought was an all-American crew," Koch said. "We bragged about it, as well. I think it gives a little more spirit to the nationality of it. If you have all Kiwis on an American team, you're not so excited about it."

Stars & Stripes Team USA gained traction in April after Canfield skippered US One Sailing Team to victory over Barker's Team American Magic in the Congressional Cup.

The Long Beach Yacht Club's first America's Cup challenge sprang from Canfield's recent dominance in the Congressional Cup, commodore Bill Durant said. □

Artificial intelligence's rise exposes gaping gender gap

By **MATT O'BRIEN**
AP Technology Writer

The challenges of making the technology industry a more welcoming place for women are numerous, especially in the booming field of artificial intelligence. To get a sense of just how monumental a task the tech community faces, look no further than the marquee gathering for AI's top scientists. Preparations for this year's event drew controversy not only because there weren't enough female speakers or study authors.

The biggest debate was over the conference's name.

The annual Conference and Workshop on Neural Information Processing Systems, formerly known as NIPS, had become a punchline symbol about just how bad the gender imbalance is for artificial intelligence. Thousands of AI researchers convened in Montreal last week under a slightly tweaked banner — NeurIPS — but with many of the same problems still under the surface.

AI's challenge reflects a broader lack of diversity in the tech industry. At major tech companies, women account for 20 percent or fewer of the engineering and computing roles. By some accounts, AI's gender imbalance is even worse: One estimate by startup incubator Element AI shows women making up just 13 percent of the AI workforce in the U.S.

The challenge has repercussions far beyond career recruitment. Artificial intelligence and a self-training discipline known as machine learning can mimic the biases of their human creators as they make their way into consumer products and everyday life.

"The more diversity we have in machine learning, the better job we will do in creating products that don't discriminate," said Hanna Wallach, a Microsoft researcher who is a senior program chairwoman of the conference and co-founder of an associated



In this July 12, 2004, file photo, a woman holds a hearing aid that uses artificial intelligence in Somerset, N.J.

event for women in machine learning.

AI systems look for patterns in huge troves of data — such as what we say to our voice assistants or what images we post on social media. These systems can share the same gender or racial prejudices found there.

Such misfires have increasingly attracted attention. A rogue Microsoft chatbot spouted sexist and racist remarks. A Google app to match selfies to famous works of mostly Western art lumped many non-whites into the same exoticized figures. In another example, a study looking at several prominent AI systems for recognizing faces showed that they performed far better on lighter-skinned men than darker-skinned women.

This year, Google tests of an email feature designed to predict what someone wants to write turned up evidence that its algorithms were making biased assumptions — referring,

for instance, to a nurse as "her" and an engineer as "him." The company said it ended up removing all gender pronouns before launching the feature in May.

And while a growing number of researchers and product designers are devoting attention to solving these problems, Wallach said it didn't help to have an "off-putting" name marred by an important gathering for sharing new research and recruiting new people. The conference dates back to 1986 and the name didn't raise as many eyebrows for its first few decades, especially with even fewer women working in tech.

But as the nerdy summit's headcount and its public reputation exploded in recent years, the nickname became increasingly embarrassing. Critics said it added to a hostile environment that for some women also included unwelcome advances and other forms of harassment.

"This name change has opened up so many of the issues that women and minorities face in tech," said longtime conference attendee Animashree Anandkumar, who directs machine-learning research at chipmaker Nvidia.

Startup booths hawked T-shirts and other promotional freebies with sexist slogans riffing off the acronym. The connotations became more problematic as the conference attracted corporate giants like Google, Amazon, Microsoft and Facebook as sponsors and attendees — and tried to promote more women and other underrepresented groups in its ranks.

Conference leaders this year acknowledged "incidents of insensitivity at past conferences" and issued stricter rules banning harassment, bullying and sexualized clothing and activities.

But they resisted changing the name as recently as October, when they released a survey of more

than 2,000 attendees — mostly men — that found most were OK with it. That led Anandkumar to start a Twitter hashtag to step up the pressure.

Katherine Heller, a Duke professor and Google researcher who helps lead a new conference committee on diversity and inclusivity, said it helped that some of the industry's leaders also weighed in. Google AI chief Jeff Dean, for instance, tweeted that "enough people are made to feel uncomfortable by the current name."

The conference board relented and announced on Nov. 16 that the new acronym would be NeurIPS. It urged participants to respect it and get back to focusing "on science and ideas."

Organizers moved the conference to a new website, printed new signs and booklets and hired a branding company to design a new logo, though the transition isn't complete. At the same time, it offered more amenities — such as child care — and more panels devoted to addressing bias and inclusion — both in the industry and the technology it creates.

The changes prompted Anandkumar to tweet that she experienced a "feeling of belonging" for the first time in years. She said she hopes it signals a "return of civility" to the field.

Heather Ames Versace, who had criticized the board for being "tone deaf," said the rebranding will help change the world's perception of the tech industry and encourage young women to join it. Versace, co-founder of AI startup Neurala, said that despite improvements, a lot more needs to be done to make AI reflective of society, not just the small group of people working on it.

"With AI, we're creating technologies that learn and make decisions in the real world," Versace said. "We need to make sure they represent a diverse set of opinions." □

Millennial Money: A college education isn't priceless

By BRIANNA MCGURRAN
Associated Press

College-bound high school seniors of America: You are about to embark on one of the most formative periods of your life, full of new friendships, personal growth and overcaffeinated conversations on the nature of humanity.

Keep "ruinous student debt" off the list.

At this point, while you're working on applications and deciding which schools most excite you, you may be hearing that college debt is "good debt." That an education is priceless, and if you're going to borrow money for anything, it should be to expand your mind and career options. That's only partially true.

It's OK to borrow some money for school. But a college education does come with a cost — one that becomes very real after graduation if student loan payments affect where you live and work, and how much you can save for the future. Years from now, college should live as a memory of late-night library runs and lightbulb moments in class, not as a financial decision



In this Thursday, Nov. 29, 2018, photo students and passers-by walk past an entrance to Boston University College of Arts and Sciences in Boston.

you regret. Here's how to make that happen.

ESTIMATE YOUR COLLEGE COSTS

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid, known as the FAFSA, opened on Oct. 1, 2018, for the 2019-20 school year. The form gives you access to free federal aid such as Pell Grants, plus low-interest federal student loans. Fill it out as soon as possible if you haven't al-

ready; some aid, such as federal work-study, is first come, first served.

The FAFSA will give you an Expected Family Contribution, the amount of money the government calculates your family can provide for college. Use the net price calculator for each school you're interested in to see how much you'll likely pay per year based on your family's income. These two

numbers should give you a picture of the schools that will require massive yearly student loan borrowing, and those that are more affordable.

It isn't easy to let go of your vision of college if your dream school is too expensive. Yes, you can always appeal for more financial aid, and living at home or applying for outside scholarships can help offset

costs. But your likely student loan burden should be one of the top factors you consider when figuring out where to apply and where to go.

FOCUS ON YOUR FUTURE STUDENT LOAN PAYMENT

Here's how to decide whether a school is truly affordable: Your student loan payment after graduation should be no more than 10 percent of your monthly take-home pay. That's true for both parents and students.

Use a student loan affordability calculator to find your maximum loan payment. As a student, you'll need to know your expected first-year salary, which you can find in the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Outlook Handbook. No idea what you'll do after school? Use \$50,000 as an upper bound; that's the median annual salary for 25- to 34-year olds with bachelor's degrees, according to the National Center for Education Statistics. But depending on where you live, \$30,000 or \$40,000 could be more realistic, especially for your first year out of school. □

US mortgage rates fall to 3-month low; 30-year at 4.63 pct.



In this Nov. 28, 2018, file photo a realtor sign hangs in front of a home for sale in Pittsburgh.

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. long-term mortgage rates fell this week to their lowest level in three months, an inducement to prospective homebuyers in a haltingly recovering market. Continued steep declines

in the stock market pushed home borrowing rates lower, although they remain much higher than a year ago. Mortgage giant Freddie Mac said Thursday the average rate on the benchmark 30-year, fixed-rate mortgage dropped to

4.63 percent from 4.75 percent last week. The key rate stood at 3.93 percent a year ago.

The rate on 15-year fixed-rate loans fell to 4.07 percent from 4.21 percent the previous week.

As mortgage rates have ended the year with declines, prospective buyers have been wading in. Mortgage applications in the week ended Dec. 7 rose 1.6 percent from a

week earlier, according to the Mortgage Bankers Association. Refinance applications increased 2 percent while applications for home purchases were up 3 percent.

After taking sharp losses at the end of last week, stocks have gyrated this week. The hour-to-hour changes reflect investors' nervousness over the health of

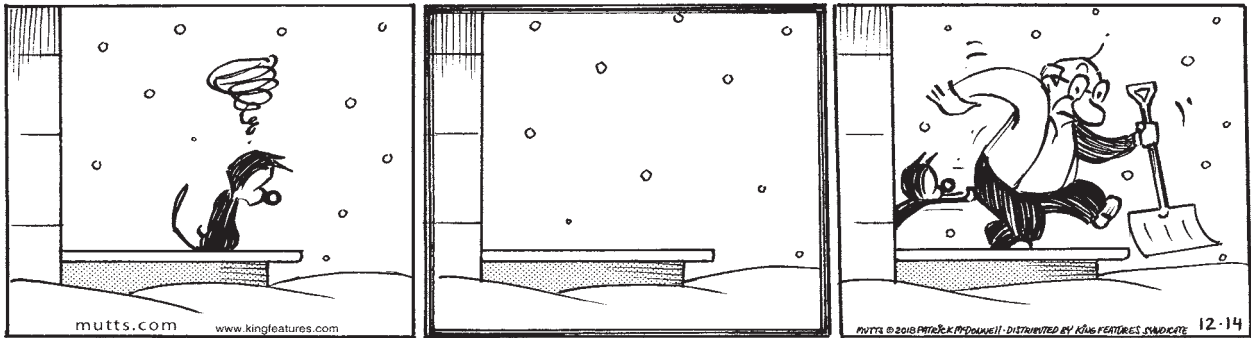
the global economy. Economic growth is expected to slow next year, and the U.S.-China trade dispute and rising interest rates could make that slowdown more painful.

To calculate average mortgage rates, Freddie Mac surveys lenders across the country between Monday and Wednesday each week. □

Artistic
L.G. Smith Blvd. 90-92
(across the Cruise Harbor)
Table-Linens
Porcelain, Watches
Only Specials on Gold
& Silver Jewelry
Free Gift

QA QUALITY APARTMENTS
Extend your stay at
All Fully Furnished w/Kitchen, Airco, Cable Tv, FREE WIFI (in and outside rooms). Swimming Pool, Gym, Library, Laundry Room & BBQ Sets. Less than 1 mile from Eagle Beach & 4 Large Supermarkets. Feel Free to contact or visit us. Mon-Fri: 8am - 7pm. Sat & Sun: 9am - 5pm. Worldwide calls: (297)-582-0697
Calls from USA & Canada: 1-888-415-1095 (toll free)
Calls from The Netherlands: 085-009-0218 (toll free)
Schotlandstraat 70, Oranjestad, Aruba
Email: quality@setarnet.aw
Website: www.arubaqualityapartments.com

Mutts



6 Chix



Blondie



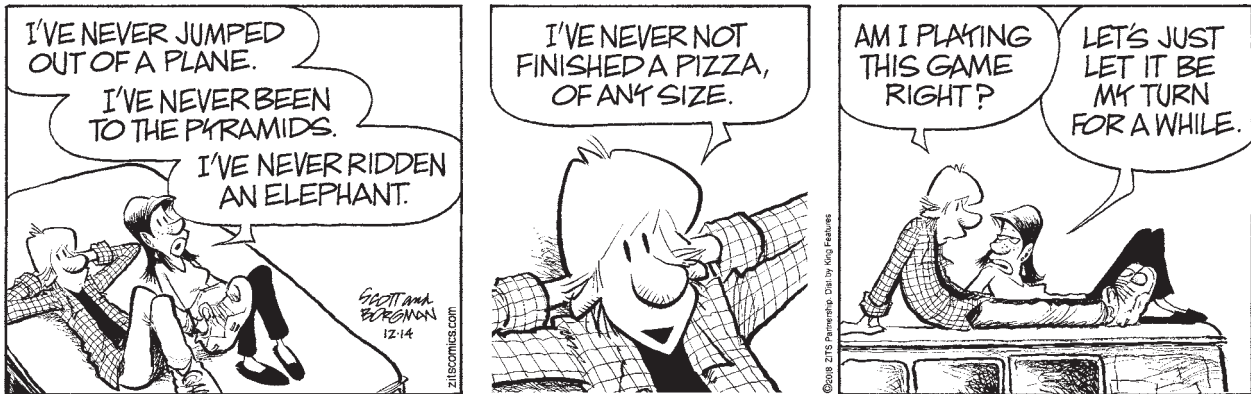
Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

8		9	7	6				
	3							
5			9		1			
9		2	1			7		
6								1
		4			3	8		5
			5	6				2
						3		
				9	2	6		7

Difficulty Level ★★★★★ 12/14

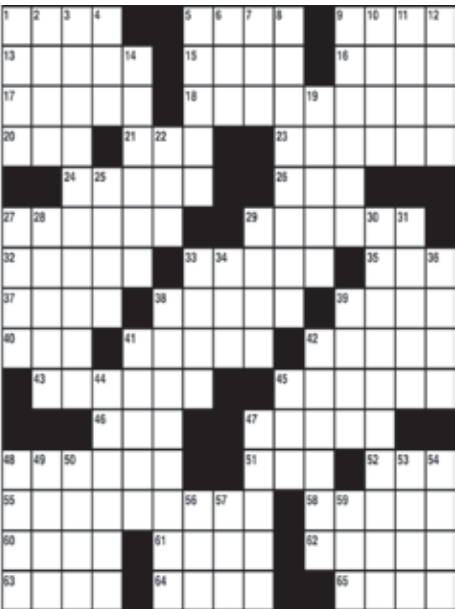
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

4	5	7	9	1	2	6	8	3
2	9	3	8	7	6	1	5	4
6	1	8	5	4	3	2	7	9
5	2	9	6	8	4	7	3	1
3	8	6	1	9	7	5	4	2
1	7	4	2	3	5	9	6	8
7	4	2	3	6	1	8	9	5
8	3	5	7	2	9	4	1	6
9	6	1	4	5	8	3	2	7

ACROSS

- 1 Bursts
5 Kermit, for one
9 as molasses
13 Parisian love
15 Temporary slowdown in activity
16 Tarzan's transport
17 Winnie-the-Pooh's creator
18 Poverty
20 Pig's home
21 Below __; substandard
23 Dissolved
24 Phantom
26 Animal in the house
27 Pastor's territory
29 Valuables
32 Livid
33 Home for a Plains Indian
35 Pink meat
37 Cuts off
38 Intimidated
39 Alpha's follower
40 Hemingway's monogram
41 Pierced by a bull's horn
42 Deep pink
43 Give confidence to
45 Give in
46 El __; Spanish hero
47 Henry or Peter
48 Leisurely walk
51 Dieter's concern: abbr.
52 Floral wire service
55 Actress Cox
58 Loosen bonds
60 Qualified
61 Feeling resentful
62 __ like; appears to be
63 __ off; irritated
64 "When You Wish Upon a __"
65 Long journey



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

12/14/18

DOWN

- 1 Shriver & Dawber
2 Take out
3 Lie detector tests
4 Source of light and heat
5 __ with; make a pass at
6 __ away; flee
7 __ Testament
8 Looked at briefly
9 Slender
10 Dryer residue
11 __ more; again
12 Garden intruder
14 Lying in __; ready for burial
19 Waterbirds
22 Hardwood tree
25 Strikes
27 Stack
28 Fragrance
29 Mocked
30 From that time forward
31 Hell's ruler
33 Ripped
34 Lamb bearer
36 Thick sweet drink

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

R	I	B		O	F	T	E	N		A	L	P	S		
C	O	L	E		C	L	A	S	H		C	O	A	L	
A	B	L	E		C	O	M	P	L	I	C	A	T	E	
A	S	I			P	U	P	P		R	E	N	E	W	
				T	O	U	R	S		C	O	P			
E	V	E	N	T	S					M	O	N	T	H	S
G	I	R	L	S		P	L	E	A	S		O	W	L	
G	R	A	Y		C	H	E	A	T		T	R	I	O	
S	A	T		F	E	I	G	N		B	U	R	N	S	
				L	E	A	R	N	S		R	E	N	E	G
					G	E	T			D	I	V	A	N	
A	G	R	E	E		P	H	O	N	Y		D	I	P	
S	L	A	N	D	E	R	O	U	S		N	O	N	E	
A	U	N	T		S	E	N	S	E		B	U	N	T	
				N	E	T	S		S	P	E	E	D		

© 2018 Tribune Content Agency, LLC All Rights Reserved.

12/14/18

- 38 Battery-powered
39 Courageous
41 Culpability
42 Population count
44 Made points
45 Actor Lowe
47 Advertising circular
48 "Get lost!"
49 "Who Wants __ a Millionaire?"
50 Bylaw
53 Magazine title
54 Student's table
56 "Judge __, lest ye be judged"
57 Period of time
59 Trawler's need

Congress moves to ban cockfighting in US territories

By **DANICA COTO**
Associated Press
SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)

— Congress on Wednesday gave final passage to legislation that would shut down legal cockfights in U.S. territories including Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, ending an institution dating from the colonial era that generates millions of dollars each year.

Opponents of the measure approved by the House said it will have a devastating effect on the islands' economies, noting that in Puerto Rico alone the cockfighting industry generates some \$18 million a year and employs some 27,000 people.

"We're all going crazy. Everybody is desperate," said 86-year-old Angel Ortiz, who owns a cockfighting ring in the city of Bayamon. "There are so many people who make a living off of this."

Puerto Rico Gov. Ricardo Rossello traveled to Washington to demand that the island be excluded, but he arrived too late. Legislators unexpectedly moved up the vote and approved the bill, which already passed the Senate.

Cockfighting in Puerto Rico was first officially recognized in 1770, but the practice was banned after the U.S. invaded the island in 1898. It wasn't until 1933 that it was declared an official sport and became known as the "gentleman's sport" because of its honor-based betting system.

In October 2010, Puerto Rico legislators voted in favor of a resolution to protect cockfights, stating they are an integral part of the island's folklore and patrimony. Officials warn that the ban will lead to unemployment on an island already dealing with a 12-year recession.

"It is a cultural and economic pillar for Puerto Ricans," Public Affairs Secretary Ramon Rosario said. "In addition to its cultural value, the cockfighting in-



In this July 6 2012 file photo, owner of a losing rooster pays his bet as the cockfight judge removes sharp plastic spurs from the defeated bird at Las Palmas, a government-sponsored cockfighting club in Bayamon, Puerto Rico.

Associated Press

dust is the only source of livelihood for thousands of Puerto Rican families." Some critics reject that cockfighting has any cultural value.

Ashley Byrne, associate director with PETA, said in a phone interview that the bill was long overdue and will help protect animals.

"Money and tradition are never an excuse for cruelty," she said. "We need to make sure that business is keeping pace with our ethics." She said most people would be appalled to learn that cockfighting is still legal in U.S. territories.

"In a modern society, forcing animals to fight for their lives is cruel," she said. "Cockfighting is a horrific blood sport."

Many in Puerto Rico and

the U.S. Virgin Islands were saddened by approval of the ban, which is expected to go into effect in a year. Stacey Plaskett, the U.S. Virgin Islands' congressional representative, said she would continue to fight the bill.

"I believed it to be a tremendous overreach of the federal government, which has not supported other basic needs of the territory," she said in a statement. Other opponents of the bill said they would struggle to find other types of work.

Miguel Trinidad, who owns a cockfighting ring in the northern Puerto Rican town of Caimito, said he was stunned by the vote. He recently invested \$50,000 cash to rebuild his business after Hurricane Maria. □



Classifieds

CASA DEL MAR FOR SALE
week 1 Presidential Unit #1313
2 Br, 2 Bath, Ocean view,
Sleeps 6
\$14,900
E-mail gkoon2@gmail.com

210447

Tropicana Aruba Resort and Casino

For Sale or Rent by Owner
week 7 one Bed Unit #1532F
Fri/Fri \$3,900
Week 13 Two Bed Unit #4552H
Fri/Fri \$4,900
Contact in Aruba
donjovi7@hotmail.com
or cell 592 0500
In US sales.cpv@hotmail.com
or cell 978 530 6077

210463



Editor

Caribbean Speed Printers N.V.
Aruba Bank N.V. Acc. #332668
Caribbean Mercantile Bank N.V.
Acc. #23951903
RBC Royal Bank Acc. #1330772

Assistant Director

Xiomara Arends

Editor in Chief

Linda Reijnders

(linda.reijnders@cspnv.com)

Liza Koolman (Management assistant)

Editors

Richard Brooks
Jeancarlo Trinidad

Sales

Linda Reijnders
(linda.reijnders@cspnv.com)
Marijke Croes

Classifieds

Rachelle Danje
(rachelle.danje@cspnv.com)

Distribution and Collection

accounting@bondia.com

Social / Website

Jeancarlo Trinidad

Weststraat 22

T: 582-7800

E: news@arubatoday.com

W: www.arubatoday.com

@arubatoday



HEALTH



Hospital

527 4000

Imsan- San Nicolas

524 8833

DOCTOR ON DUTY

Oranjestad

Dr. Cayama Tel. 583 2772

San Nicolas

PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad:

Sta. Anna Tel. 586 8181

San Nicolas

Aloe Tel. 584 4606

OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850

Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002

Mobility Equip. Gire

568 5165

Urgent Care 586 0448

EMERGENCY

Police	100
Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas	587 5900
Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

TRAVEL INFO

Aruba Airport	524 2424
American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Aruba Airlines	583 8300
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896
Venezolana	583 7674

CRUISES



December 14

Serenade of the Seas

December 15

Sea Cloud II / AIDAperla

Celebrity Reflection / Star Flyer

AID FOUNDATIONS

FAVI- Visually Incapacitated
Tel. 582 5051

Alcoholics Anonymous
Tel. 736 2952

Narcotics Anonymous
Tel. 583 8989

Women in Difficulties
Tel. 583 5400

Centre for Diabetes
Tel. 524 8888

Child Abuse Prevention
Tel. 582 4433

Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

General Info

Phone Directory Tel. 118

Virgin Galactic tourism rocket ship reaches space in test

By JOHN ANTCHAK

Associated Press

MOJAVE, Calif. (AP) —

Virgin Galactic's tourism spaceship climbed more than 50 miles high above California's Mojave Desert on Thursday, reaching for the first time what the company considers the boundary of space.

The rocket ship hit an altitude of 51 miles (82 kilometers) before beginning its gliding descent, said mission official Enrico Palermo. It landed on a runway minutes later.

"We made it to space!" Palermo said.

Thursday's supersonic flight takes Virgin Galactic a big step closer to turning the dream of commercial space tourism into reality. The company aims to take paying customers on the six-passenger rocket, which is about the size of an executive jet. Virgin Galactic founder Richard Branson has said he wants to be one of the first on board. Branson greeted the two pilots after the test, declaring "Space is Virgin territory!"

Virgin Galactic considers 50 miles (80 kilometers) the boundary of space because it is used by the U.S. Air Force and other U.S. agencies. That's different than a long-held view that the boundary is at 62 miles (100 kilometers). Virgin Galactic CEO George Whitesides noted that recent research favors the lower altitude.

At the start of the test flight, a special jet carrying the Virgin Space Ship Unity flew to an altitude near 43,000 feet (13,100 meters) before releasing the craft. The spaceship ignited its rocket engine and it quickly hurtled upward and out



This May 29, 2018 photo provided by Virgin Galactic shows the VSS Unity craft during a supersonic flight test.

of sight of viewers on the ground. The spaceship reached Mach 2.9, nearly three times the speed of sound.

The two test pilots — Mark "Forger" Stucky and former NASA astronaut Rick "CJ" Sturckow — will be awarded commercial astronaut wings, said Federal Aviation Administration official Bailey Edwards.

Virgin Galactic's development of its spaceship took far longer than expected and endured a setback when the first experimental craft broke apart during a 2014 test flight, killing the co-pilot.

More than 600 people have committed up to \$250,000 for rides that include several minutes of weightlessness and a view of the Earth far below.

The endeavor began in 2004 when Branson announced the founding of Virgin Galactic in the heady days after the flights of SpaceShipOne, the first

privately financed manned spacecraft that made three flights into space.

Funded by the late billionaire Paul G. Allen and created by maverick aerospace designer Burt Rutan, SpaceShipOne won the \$10 million Ansari X Prize. The prize was created to kick-start private development of rocket ships that would make spaceflight available to the public.

When Branson licensed the

SpaceShipOne technology, he envisioned a fleet carrying paying passengers by 2007, launching them from a facility in southern New Mexico called Spaceport America.

But there were significant setbacks. Three technicians were killed in 2007 by an explosion while testing a propellant system at Scaled Composites LLC, which built SpaceShipOne and was building the first

SpaceShipTwo for Virgin Galactic.

Then, in 2014, SpaceShipTwo broke apart during a test flight by Scaled Composites when the co-pilot prematurely unlocked its unique "feathering" system and it began to deploy. The co-pilot was killed but the injured pilot managed to survive a fall from high altitude with a parachute.

During descent, the craft's twin tails are designed to rotate upward to slow it down, then return to a normal flying configuration before the craft glides to a landing on a runway.

New versions of SpaceShipTwo are built by a Virgin Galactic sister company and flight testing is now in-house. Its previous test flight reached 32 miles (52 kilometers).

Branson isn't alone in the space tourism business: Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin is planning to take space tourists on suborbital trips, using the more traditional method of a capsule atop a rocket that blasts off from a launch pad. SpaceX's Elon Musk recently announced plans to take a wealthy Japanese entrepreneur and his friends on a trip around the moon. □

Record number of Mexican gray wolves found dead in 2018

By SUSAN MONTOYA BRYAN

Associated Press

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP)

— Wildlife managers have confirmed a record number of Mexican gray wolves have been reported dead this year, fueling concerns about the decades-long effort to return the endangered predator to the southwestern U.S. Officials say five wolves were found dead in New Mexico in November, bringing the total for the year to 17. It marks one of the deadliest months in the history of the wolf reintroduction program. The U.S. government began releasing Mexican wolves in 1998. The latest annual sur-



In this Dec. 7, 2011, file photo, a female Mexican gray wolf looks to avoid being captured for its annual vaccinations and medical check-up at the Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge in central New Mexico.

Associated Press

vey indicated at least 114 wolves were roaming parts of Arizona and New Mexico in early 2018.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is investigating but hasn't said how the animals died. □



Honey Dolls
MASSAGE AND ESCORT SERVICE
Beautiful Latin Girls
Pick-up & Delivery

Serving Men - Couple - Women - All Genders
Bachelor Party Specialized, the best in the Caribbean
Call: 565-9535

Janet Jackson, Def Leppard, Nicks join Rock Hall of Fame

By **DAVID BAUDER**

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Janet Jackson joins her brother Michael and the Jackson 5 as members of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, earning induction on Thursday along with Stevie Nicks and the top fan vote-getter, Def Leppard.

Radiohead, the Cure, Roxy Music and the Zombies will also be ushered in next spring at the 34th induction ceremony. It will be held March 29 at Barclays Center in Brooklyn.

Jackson's induction comes after her third time as nominee and many saw it as overdue, given her prowess as a hitmaker with "All For You," "That's the Way Love Goes," "Nasty," "Together Again" and "What Have You Done For Me Lately."

Her career has suffered from the fallout after the infamous 2004 Super Bowl appearance where her bare breast was briefly exposed. Jackson became eligible for the rock hall in 2007 and wasn't nominated until 2016.

The Roots' Questlove, in a social media post earlier this year, said her exclusion had been "highly criminal." He cited the influence of her 1986 album "Control," which he said set off the New Jack Swing trend.

"This was no one's kid sister," he wrote.

Jackson said on Thursday: "Thank you Rock and Roll



In this July 8, 2018 file photo, Janet Jackson performs at the 2018 Essence Festival in New Orleans. Jackson will join Def Leppard, Stevie Nicks, Radiohead, the Cure, Roxy Music and the Zombies as new members of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Hall of Fame. I am truly honored and I am happy to be in there with my brothers." It will be Nicks' second induction into the rock hall, since she's already there as a member of Fleetwood Mac. She launched a solo career in 1981 with her duet with the late Tom Petty, "Stop Draggin' My Heart Around." Other hits followed, including "Edge of Seventeen," "Stand Back" and "I Will Run to You."

Def Leppard earned more than half a million votes from fans, which are incorporated into more than 1,000 ballots from artists,

historians, industry professionals and past winners in deciding who gets honored. The British heavy metal band with a pop sheen were huge sellers in the 1980s on the back of songs like "Photograph" and "Pour Some Sugar on Me." Frontman Joe Elliott said he was initially ambivalent toward the honor until Jon Bon Jovi suggested it would change his life.

"When I look at the list of who's in, it's just obvious you'd want to be in that club, isn't it?" he told Billboard earlier this year. "When you think that every

band that means anything in the world, starting from the Beatles and the Stones and any artist that influenced them — your Chuck Berrys, your Little Richards, etc., etc. — then of course you want to be in. Why wouldn't you?"

Def Leppard, Nicks and Roxy Music were voted in during their first years as nominees. Other 2019 nominees who didn't make the cut included LL Cool J, Devo, Rage Against the Machine, MC5, John Prine, Todd Rundgren and Kraftwerk.

There's some question

about whether Radiohead will shrug its collective shoulder as an inductees. The English band seemed like generic grunge rockers on their initial hit "Creep," but with the album "OK Computer" and beyond have become consistent sonic pioneers. Among its rock hall class, Radiohead has the most impact on the current music scene. In an interview with Rolling Stone earlier this year, Radiohead's Jonny Greenwood said "I don't care" when asked about the rock hall. Bandmate Ed O'Brien said, "culturally, I don't understand it. I think it might be a quintessentially American thing." The Cure and frontman Robert Smith resist their initial label as goth rockers, champions of fans who like black makeup, black clothes and darkly romantic songs. They have a durable catalog of hits, including "Friday I'm in Love," "Boys Don't Cry," "Pictures of You" and "Let's Go to Bed."

Roxy Music came out of the 1970s progressive rock scene and had hits with "Love is the Drug" and "More Than This." Dapper member Bryan Ferry had a successful solo career and Brian Eno has been an influential producer.

The heyday of British rockers the Zombies' career was the 1960s, with big sellers "She's Not There" and "Time of the Season." □

'Pandemic' rings warning bell about gene-editing technology

By **WAKA TSUNODA**

Associated Press

"Pandemic" (Putnam), by Robin Cook

When there's a scientific breakthrough, Robin Cook doesn't just stand up and cheer. He uses his fertile imagination and writes a novel about its possible perils. In his latest medical thriller, "Pandemic," Cook dramatizes the scary side of a miracle molecule called "CRISPR/Cas9," which can easily be custom-tailored to seek out and alter genes in humans and animals.

The story begins when a

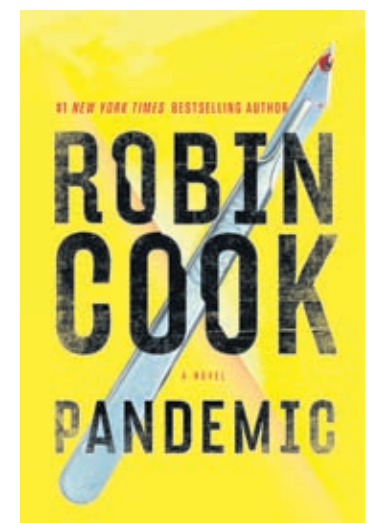
seemingly healthy young woman with a transplanted heart boards the subway in New York City but suffers abrupt respiratory distress and dies before she reaches her destination.

Jack Stapleton, a medical examiner who appears in 10 of Cook's previous novels, does an autopsy. He suspects that an unknown, flu-like virus is responsible for her death. He is duty-bound to identify and stop the virus before it can cause a pandemic and kill millions.

Stapleton welcomes the

challenge as a "diversion" from his many personal problems. To name a few, his daughter has just been diagnosed with autism and his mother-in-law is blaming his genealogy for it. His wife, Laurie Montgomery, has unexpectedly been named the chief medical examiner, making her his boss both at home and at work. Stapleton's investigation reveals that a hospital in New York performed the woman's heart transplant at the request of the Dover Valley Hospital in New Jersey. Dover also paid all her

medical bills. Realizing that "something weird is afoot," Stapleton drives out to Dover and receives a warm welcome from its owner, Wei Zhao, a Chinese billionaire businessman who holds a double Ph.D. in molecular biology and genetics. Wei, a body-building enthusiast who admires Arnold Schwarzenegger, makes an intriguing villain. The novel also offers an intriguing look at the subterranean world of medical examiners, but "Pandemic" goes far beyond just entertainment. □



This cover image released by Putnam shows "Pandemic," a novel by Robin Cook.

Associated Press

In 'The Mule,' Clint reflects on a life on the road

By **JAKE COYLE**
Associated Press

Both tender apologia and vigorous justification, Clint Eastwood's "The Mule" is a deeply, fascinatingly personal meditation from the 88-year-old director who, like his aged drug mule protagonist, has spent a long time on the road. "The Mule" is the indefatigable Eastwood's second film just this year, following "The 15:17 to Paris," a distinctly undramatic dramatization of the thwarted 2015 train attack, starring the real-life heroes. Eastwood isn't playing himself in "The Mule" — far from it — but it's hard not to appreciate, and be moved by, the film's many echoes for the filmmaker, acting for the first time in one of his own since 2008's similarly self-reflective "Gran Torino." That he finds such intimate dimensions in the story of Leo Sharp is a testament to both Eastwood's knack for pared-down elegy and to the lean script by Nick Schenk that envisions larger American themes within its geriatric drug courier.



This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows Clint Eastwood in a scene from "The Mule."

Associated Press

Sharp was arrested at age 87 with 104 kilos of cocaine in the back of his pickup while en route to Detroit. Little in the World War II veteran's appearance suggested his secret identity. Sharp, it was discovered, was among the most prolific regional smugglers for the Sinoloa cartel. The hard-to-believe tale

was recounted by The New York Times' Sam Dolnick, an article that's been adapted here. "The Mule" takes plenty of liberties with Sharp's story — Eastwood's smuggler is named Earl Stone, and is a Korean War vet — just as it has found curious parallels for its star. Some of them are silly. Some are profound. But rarely does "The Mule" — for better and worse — not reverberate with East-

wood's own mythology in intriguing, if sometimes painfully awkward ways. Eastwood's Stone is a celebrated horticulturalist whose specialty is the daylily, a fragile flower that blooms for 24 hours a year. In the film's early scenes, we see him, dressed in a seersucker suit, dishing out jokes while being fawned over by fans. Eastwood has made celebrity a regular subject, (the Capt. Chesley Sullenberger

of his "Sully" resented the spotlight). But the director has found his most peculiar metaphor for his own fame in a horticulturalist who wins at the daylily equivalent of the Oscars. But Stone's lily farm runs into hard times. Dolling out cash to his Hispanic workers, he mutters, "Damned internet. It ruins everything." Like "Gran Torino" (also penned by Schenk) there are plenty of such old-man lines in "The Mule," some delightful, some less so. We learn that Stone has long been estranged from his bitter ex-wife Mary (Dianne Wiest) and his equally furious daughter Iris (Alison Eastwood, the director's daughter), though his granddaughter Ginny (Taissa Farmiga) has kept the faith. To help pay for Ginny's wedding, Stone follows a tip that leads him to a nondescript auto shop. Cartel members put a bag of drugs in his beat-up Ford pickup, hand him a phone and tell him to respond to any call or text. "Text?" he replies. After reaching his destination, Stone finds a wad of cash in the glove compartment. □

MEGAPLEX 8
The only theater in Aruba with all stadium seating!
caribbeancinemas.com f Caribbean Cinemas Aruba

DECEMBER 13 - 19	
<p>AQUAMAN PG-13 JASON MOMOA AMBER HEARD MON-THU & SUN 7:50 FRI-SAT 7:50 10:45 CXC MON-FRI 3:00 9:05 SAT-SUN 3:15 3:00 9:05 TIP MON-THU 5:35 8:30 FRI 5:35 8:30 11:25 SAT 2:40 5:35 8:30 11:25 SUN 2:40 5:35 8:30</p>	<p>ONCE UPON A DEADPOOL PG-13 RYAN REYNOLDS JOSH BROLIN MON-FRI 4:10 6:40 SAT-SUN 1:45 4:10 6:40</p>
<p>SPIDER-MAN PG JAKE JOHNSON HAILIE STEINFELD MON-THU 4:15 9:15 FRI 4:15 6:45 9:15 11:45 SAT 1:50 4:25 6:45 9:15 11:45 SUN 1:50 4:45 6:45 9:15 SPANISH SAT-SUN 1:00</p>	<p>MORTAL ENGINES PG-13 HERA HILMAR HUGO WEAVING MON-SUN 9:10 TIP MON-THU 6:05 8:45 FRI 6:05 8:45 11:25 SAT 3:25 6:05 8:45 11:25 SUN 3:25 6:05 8:45</p>
<p>QUE LEON PG-13 OZUNA CLARISA MOLINA SPANISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES MON-THU 5:25 7:30 9:35 FRI 5:25 7:30 9:35 11:40 SAT 3:20 5:25 7:30 9:35 11:40 SUN 3:20 5:25 7:30 9:35</p>	<p>RALPH BREAKS THE INTERNET PG JOHN C. REILLY SARAH SILVERMAN WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES MON-FRI 5:45 SAT-SUN 1:00 3:20 5:45</p>
<p>CREED 2 PG-13 MICHAEL B. JORDAN SYLVESTER STALLONE WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES MON-THU & SUN 8:10 FRI-SAT 8:10 10:55</p>	<p>THE GRINCH PG BENEDICT CUMBERBATCH CAMERON SEELY WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES MON-FRI 5:50 SAT-SUN 1:50 5:50</p>

STARTING DECEMBER 20: BUMBLEBEE • WELCOME TO MARWEN • SECOND ACT

Palm Beach Plaza Aruba | 586.0074

THE MAGIC OF THE MOVIES ON YOUR MOBILE DEVICE

Download on the App Store GET IT ON Google Play

Kathie Lee Gifford to leave NBC's 'Today' show in April

By **MARK KENNEDY**
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Kathie Lee Gifford will put aside her morning glass of wine and step away from NBC's "Today" show in April. NBC News chief Noah Oppenheim told staffers Tuesday morning that Gifford will leave the show after 11 years of getting up early, most recently hosting the 10 a.m. hour slot alongside Hoda Kotb and sipping plenty of reds. In a memo to staff, Oppenheim called the 65-year-old Gifford "one of the most enduring and endearing talents in morning television. In short — she is a legend." He said she will focus on her film, music and book projects. In the memo, Oppenheim said Gifford told him she was leaving "with a grateful heart but I'm truly excited for this new creative season in my life." The move comes as NBC News struggles to remake its sprawling four-hour morning show following the cancellation earlier this



In this July 26, 2018 file photo, Kathie Lee Gifford attends Hallmark's Evening Gala during the TCA Summer Press Tour in Beverly Hills, Calif.

Associated Press

year of Megyn Kelly's hour-long slot. Before landing the NBC gig, Gifford co-hosted "Live" opposite Regis Philbin for 11 years. She left that show in 2000 and joined "Today" in 2008. □

Doo doo doo doo doo doo: 'Baby Shark' bites into the culture

By **LEANNE ITALIE**
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — In the wise words of James Corden, there comes along a song every so often that defines a generation.

Doo doo doo doo doo doo.

The late-night TV host, car-pool karaoke king and father of three young children was referring specifically, and wryly, to "Baby Shark," now the bloodthirstiest of earworms for some parents and meme lovers everywhere.

Insert shark hands here.

If you don't know what I'm talking about, you've been living inside a sea anemone since at least 2015. That's when an educational content brand in South Korea, Pinkfong, released its first shark video, later breaking the internet with a version mixing animation and two adorable human kids dancing out the story of a shark family, K-pop style, earning more than 2 billion views on YouTube.

If you still don't know what I'm talking about, you haven't spent enough time at summer camp or around a campfire, where sing-along versions of said story with said gestures, akin to an old nursery rhyme with the same theme, have rocked on for decades.

Now, thanks to the #babysharkchallenge that has us all singing, doing our shark hands and sharing on social media, and thanks to piles of soft shark heads, toddler attire and other swag that includes singing plush toys and books, "Baby Shark" is a full-on craze, for bite-size fans anyway.

"Our toddler's shark video addiction is a huge issue in our household," said Columbus, Ohio, mom Kitty French.

"At first it was a cute melody. Now it's an earworm that literally all of our parent friends understand." Not all grown-ups are weary.

If they were, would they continue to upload themselves in mashups and mixes, from R&B to Santa

Claus? Can we do without the absolutely cutest home video of them all, the little girl begging Alexa to play her favorite shark jam, frustrated by the not-so-smart device's inability to understand? What about the Texas family so enamored they synchronized their blinking,

kids prefer versions of baby, mama, papa, grandma and grandpa shark from a content provider called Super Simple.

There are many, many other offerings to choose from and many, many more millions of views than the jackpot scored by Pinkfong for

"Also, both the music and the animation are predictable, with repeated words, phrases, colors and movements."

The combinations can capture and sustain attention even in children where attention isn't a strength, Cunningham said. The

why we picked it for her Halloween costume," he said.

"At the end of the Super Simple version, it says 'bye bye sharks' and that became how we say bye in our family. She now fusses when she hears it."

But there's plenty more fish in the "Baby Shark" sea.

A Montreal-based company, WowWee, has a Pinkfong license for North America to sell the shark family in plush toys that sing when tummies are squeezed, along with soft song cube versions.

Available exclusively on Amazon on pre-order that guaranteed delivery in time for Christmas, they sold out in two and a half days earlier this month, said Davin Sufer, WowWee's chief technology officer.

Sufer would not disclose how many units were gobbled up at \$19.99 each. More will be rolled out at a broader range of retailers come early 2019, along with new offerings. Third-party sellers who nabbed the toys are now offering them for more than \$100 on Amazon.

The privately-held WowWee was already in talks with Pinkfong as far back as nearly a year ago when "Baby Shark" truly exploded, said Sufer, who has three kids of his own, including a 9-year-old daughter who came home from camp last summer singing the song before she knew his involvement.

"The tune itself has an addictive quality to it," he said. "You hear it once or twice and you hear yourself singing, doo doo doo doo doo doo. I could see maybe parents getting a little tired of it, but kids aren't." □



This picture shows the WowWee pinkfong Baby Shark family of singing plush toys.

Associated Press

blinding holiday yard lights to the snappy tune?

Some parents of special needs kids think "Baby Shark" has not only entertained but helped their young ones.

Holly Anderson is a Utah mother of four, including a 3-year-old son with autism and apraxia of speech. His autism therapist uses children's songs on YouTube to motivate him to sit still and was the first to show him "Baby Shark."

"He's overstimulated visually and usually won't watch any shows on TV or the iPad," Anderson said. "He has a very difficult time staying still, even for a moment, and usually spends his time running around in therapy. I'm honestly not sick of it yet since it's one of the only ways to get him calm after a meltdown."

The one he likes the most is by Pinkfong, she said. The company has put up more than one version. Other parents said their

its dance version.

Corden, host of "The Late Late Show with James Corden," isn't the only celebrity to take on baby shark madness.

He enlisted Sophie Turner and Josh Groban to perform the song on air.

Ellen DeGeneres put her spin on the song on her talk show as well and Simon Cowell's 4-year-old son popped up on the "X-Factor UK" as dancing cuteness ensued with singing kids accompanied by adults in shark suits for the opening of the grand final this year.

Bob Cunningham, an educator and senior adviser for the nonprofit consortium Understood.org, which supports parents of kids with learning and attention issues, sees several benefits to "Baby Shark."

"The song has a catchy rhythm and it uses silly sounds as well as colorful and cute animation," he said.

song and video also engage most of the senses simultaneously and combine language with music and movement, which can appeal to kids who struggle when they are presented in isolation.

For example, the movement can support less developed language and the music can offer support when movements are difficult, he said.

Clearly, other kid content can do the same, but "Baby Shark" ruled at Jason Simms' house, at least for a time.

Simms, who lives in Deep River, Connecticut, said his 14-month-old daughter Fionnuala first heard the song when she was 8 months old but has since tired of it, before her parents did, once her language comprehension skills began kicking in.

"It was one of the first things in life she directly expressed a preference for, so that's



With OK from Congress, US hemp market set to boom

By GILLIAN FLACCUS

Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) —

Hemp is about to get the nod from the federal government that marijuana, its cannabis plant cousin, craves.

A provision of the farm bill that received final approval in Congress on Wednesday removes hemp from the list of federally controlled substances and treats the low-THC version of the cannabis plant like any other agricultural crop. THC is the cannabis compound that gives pot its high.

President Trump is expected to sign the bill into law next week.

The change sets the stage for greater expansion in an industry already seeing explosive growth because of growing demand for cannabidiol, or CBD, a non-psychoactive compound found in hemp that many see as a way to better health.

Federal legalization could triple the overall hemp market to \$2.5 billion by 2022, with \$1.3 billion of those sales from hemp-derived CBD products, according to New Frontier Data, a cannabis market research firm.

"It's a huge deal because it's a domino effect. Banks can get involved now and if banks get involved, then credit card processors get involved — and if that happens, then big box stores like Target and Wal-Mart get into it," said Sean Murphy, a New Frontier data analyst who's tracked the industry since its infancy in 2015. "All these big players are going to come in."

Hemp, like marijuana, already is legal in some states. Approval at the national level brings a host of benefits that the pot industry has yet to see.

Hemp farmers will be able to buy crop insurance, apply for loans and grants, and write off their business expenses on their taxes like any other farmer.

And those who sell dried flower or CBD-infused products made from hemp can now ship across state lines



In this April 23, 2018 file photo, a sign designates the type of crop grown in a field as it stands ready to plant another hemp crop for Big Top Farms near Sisters, Ore.

without fear of prosecution as long as they are careful not to run afoul of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Many did so before, but always looked over their shoulder because the law was unclear.

Michelle and Scott Fields, who run an organic hemp farm outside Grants Pass, Oregon, include a detailed letter to law enforcement in each package they ship that explains the dried flowers inside may look a lot like pot, but actually can't get anyone high.

"Probably the best part of this is that everybody can take a sigh of relief and not worry about that gray area anymore," said Michelle Fields, who worked in real

estate until three years ago, when she and her husband started Fields of Hemp LLC. Hemp looks like marijuana to the untrained eye, but it contains less than 0.3 percent THC. Federal legislation passed four years ago cracked open the door for some farming by allowing states to create hemp pilot programs or to conduct research on hemp cultivation.

Twenty-three states issued 3,544 licenses in 2018, said Eric Steenstra, president of Vote Hemp, a nonprofit hemp advocacy group. At the same time, the total market for hemp — from textiles to seeds to CBD oil — has grown from a few million dollars in 2015

to \$820 million today and about a third of that is from hemp-derived CBD, Murphy said.

Large companies already experimenting in the hemp space anticipated the policy change and are poised to cash in.

Vitality, based in Eureka, Montana, is a large U.S. hemp producer and grew 20,000 acres this year. The company last week announced a merger with the Canadian CBD extractor and marketer LiveWell.

The new company aspires to become one of the largest hemp production and CBD extraction companies in North America, producing more than 6,600 pounds of CBD isolate (3,000 kilo-

grams) a day by mid-2019, according to a company statement on the deal.

Isolate is a crystalline powder form of CBD and is the purest product possible. The odorless, tasteless powder is commonly sold in one gram jars that retail for \$35 to \$60 each.

"We were at the right place at the right time," David Rendimonti, president and CEO for LiveWell, said. "You're in a high-value, high-growth market. It's an amazing opportunity and now you have something that's really going to explode." FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb has said in the past that CBD products will be treated like any other products that make unproven claims to shrink cancer tumors or other statements. The FDA has sent warning letters to some companies marketing CBD. The new bill retains the FDA's authority over products that contain CBD.

"That's the big question mark," Murphy said. "The market's going to grow, the market's going to expand, but it's going to come down to what the FDA is going to do about it."

Individual states can also make and enforce rules banning hemp or CBD even though it's no longer considered a controlled substance — another wild card. Yet there's no question legalization means things will get a lot easier for small farmers.

Clarenda Stanley-Anderson and her husband, Malcolm Anderson Sr., lost two acres of hemp they grew under a North Carolina pilot program when Hurricane Florence barreled through in September. They had no crop insurance because they couldn't get it when hemp was listed as a federally controlled substance.

The Andersons plan to plant 15 acres this spring and put up greenhouses. They will buy crop insurance and have just signed a contract to provide their dried flower to a Denver company that will extract CBD from it. □



In this September 2018 photo provided by Clarenda "Cee" Stanley-Anderson, Stanley-Anderson and her husband, Malcolm Anderson Sr., pose for pictures of their hemp-farming business, Green Heffa Farms, Inc., in Liberty, N.C.

Associated Press